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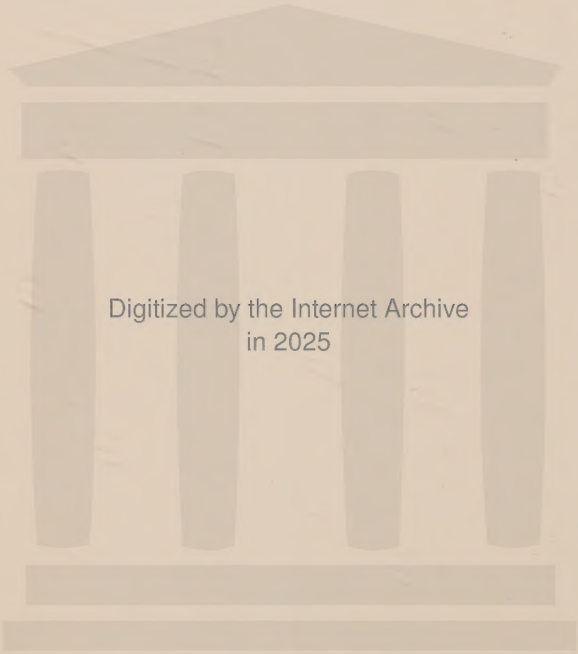
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THE EVOLUTION OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE

A HISTORICAL SKETCH

First Edition, - - - *February* 1901.
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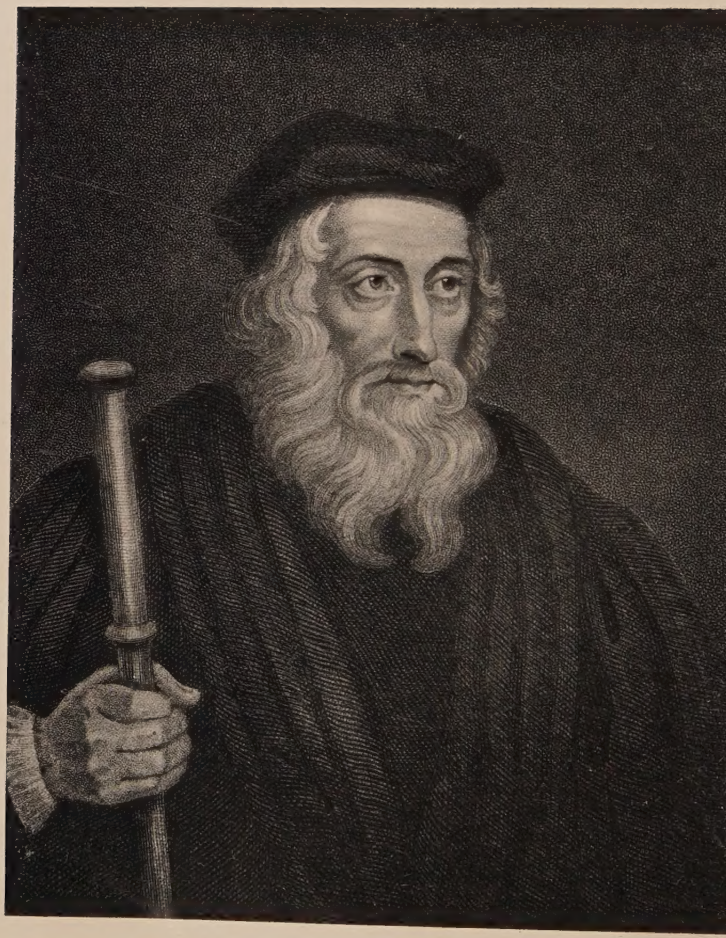

JOHN WYCLIFFE.
(*From an Engraving by* C. WHITE.)

[*Frontispiec*

THE EVOLUTION OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE

A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE SUCCESSIVE VERSIONS FROM 1382 TO 1885

By H. W. HOARE

LATE OF
BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD

SECOND EDITION
REVISED AND CORRECTED THROUGHOUT
AND INCLUDING A BIBLIOGRAPHY

WITH PORTRAITS AND SPECIMEN-PAGES FROM OLD BIBLES

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1902

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET
1902

TO

THE MEMORY OF

MY FATHER AND MOTHER

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

I WISH to thank the readers of my "historical sketch," both English and American, for a reception which has been by far more cordial than an unknown author, writing on a somewhat well-worn theme, could reasonably have anticipated.

My acknowledgments are also due to all who, whether by reviews or otherwise, have enabled me to correct errors of fact, or type, or grammar.

A critic here and there has laid it to my charge that I have added nothing to the sum of human knowledge. My ambition did not soar so high. What I tried to do was to give a new presentment to an old subject, to rearrange familiar material into something of a fresh pattern, to enlist the interest of a yet wider public in a tale which could well afford to be told once again,—"*proprie*," as Horace pithily puts it, "*communia dicere*."

My treatment of the subject—may I repeat—is in the main uncontroversial, popular, and historical. It is concerned rather with the external than with the internal aspect of the successive versions. Its aim is to give to each version its appropriate historical setting, and

by so doing, to develop, in an unbroken narrative, the story of our national Bible in close association with the story of our national life.

The internal history has not been overlooked, but it occupies only a subordinate place. To deal with it as it ought to be dealt with, to examine the process of translation critically at each stage of its progress, to exhibit, by a detailed collation, the literary interdependence and independence of the versions, all this is a task worthy indeed of long and patient labour, but one quite beyond my own powers. I have not the leisure which it demands, nor have I the requisite ability and training.

One point more. I am advised that it is better for an author to add a bibliography of his subject to a volume like the present, than to take for granted that it can be dispensed with. In deference therefore to those who are in a position to know, I have now thrown into an appendix a list of the best-known works in this country on the history of the English Bible. To this I have added the names of various authorities, historical and other, to whom, in one way or another, I am indebted. The literature of the subject, I need hardly say, is very far too extensive to admit of anything more than a restricted selection.

H. W. H.

LONDON, *February*, 1902.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THE sketch which has been attempted in the following pages, a sketch which is drawn on historical rather than on critical lines, was originally suggested by two articles which were contributed to the *Nineteenth Century Review* in 1898-9, and I am glad to avail myself of this opportunity of thanking Mr Knowles for allowing me to make use of them.

No handbook seems hitherto to have been published which sought to combine, within modest limits, some general account of the successive versions of our national Bible with their historical setting.

Accordingly, in designing such a handbook, an endeavour has been made so to bring the history of the versions into relation with the main current of events as to associate the story of the national Bible with the story of the national life.

No formal list of authorities is appended. It was felt that such a list might appear a little out of keeping with the unpretentious and popular character of this sketch. But at the same time I desire gratefully to

acknowledge my debt to Bishop Westcott and the late Dr Eadie, among other well-known writers on the subject, as well as to the custodians of our rich collections of old Bibles. I have tried to secure accuracy in matters of fact, but where, as in official life, literary work can only be done in brief and broken intervals of leisure, mistakes will be likely to creep in, and it would be a kindness to me if any such might in due course be pointed out for future correction. H. W. H.

LONDON, 1901.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

FOR THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE

SIXTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

A.D.

563. St Columba founds the Monastery of Iona.
590-604. Gregory the Great, last of the Latin Fathers—Founder of the Medieval Papacy.
597. St Augustine's mission in Kent.
626-55. The supremacy of Penda, and of Paganism, in Mercia.
627. Paulinus in Northumbria.
631. Felix in East Anglia.
635. Aidan in Northumbria.
664. Conference at Whitby.
669-90. Archbishop Theodore.
673. The first "Pan-Anglican" Synod, at Hertford.
675. Cædmon.
673-735. Bede of Jarrow. Aldhelm of Malmesbury. Cynewulf.
726. The Iconoclastic controversy in the East.
732. Battle of Tours, and defeat of the Saracens.
750. Alliance of the Franks with the Papacy.
753-4. The Roman forgery called *The Donation of Constantine.*
755. Pepin endows the "Holy Roman Republic" with the Exarchate of Ravenna and the Pentapolis.
787. Appearance of the Northmen.
800. Coronation of Charles the Great.
814. Death of Charles the Great.
828. Egbert, King of all the English.
850. John Scotus Erigena.
The False Decretals (Pseudo-Isidore).
871-96. King Alfred. The English Chronicle.
955. Dunstan.
970-1006. Abbot Ælfric. The Durham Gospels.

A.D.

970-1006. The "Exeter" } books of primitive national poetry.
The "Vercelli" }

1030. The Rushworth Gospels.

1066. Battle of Hastings.

1073. Gregory VII. (Hildebrand.)

1090. Anselm.

1116. University of Bologna.

1150-1250. Miracle and Mystery Plays.

1150. Gratian's Decretum or Corpus Canonici Juris.

1164. Constitutions of Clarendon.

1170. Murder of Becket.

1198-1254. Innocent III. Gregory IX. Innocent IV. Culminatio
of the Papal power, and development of the Inquisi
tion.

1200. University of Paris.

1209. The Albigensian Massacres.

1213. Submission of King John. England a Papal fief, an
its King the Pope's "man."

1215. Magna Charta. Stephen Langton.
The "Ormulum" paraphrase written.

1219. The Dominican } Friars arrive in England.
1224. The Franciscan }

1230-90. Roger Bacon.

1250. "*Genesis and Exodus*," a poetical paraphrase.

1264. Merton College founded.

1265. The First Parliament of England.

1227-74. Aquinas. }
1275-1308. Duns Scotus. } Leading Schoolmen.
1290-1349. Bradwardine. }

1279. Statute of Mortmain.

1294-13. Boniface VIII.

1300-1347. William of Ockham. Marsiglio of Padua.

1305-77. The Popes at Avignon.

1313-22. Conflict between (*a*) The Empire and the Papacy ; (*b*
The Papacy and the "spiritual" Franciscans.

1320. "*Cursor Mundi*," a religious history in metre, writte
in Northumbria.
A Psalter in English prose, doubtfully ascribed t
William of Shoreham.

A.D.

1322. Conference at Perugia on "Evangelical Poverty."
The Secession of the "Fraticelli," otherwise known as the "spiritual" Franciscans.
1324. Birth of Wycliffe (approximate date).
1324. The treatise, "*Defensor Pacis*," by Marsiglio of Padua.
1328. Birth of Chaucer.
1338. Wycliffe enters Oxford (approximate date).
1338-1453. The Hundred Years' War.
1340. *The Psalter*, in English prose, by Hampole.
1341. Earliest appointment of a layman as Chancellor.
1346. Battle of Crécy.
1347-54. Rienzi at Rome.
1348-9. The Plague, or Black Death, by which not less than half the population perished.
1350. Clement VI. "Jubilee" pilgrimage to Rome enforced, *in spite of the plague*, to raise money through sale of indulgences.
1351. First *Statute of Provisors* against Papal interference with ecclesiastical patronage.
1352. *Statute of Labourers*, with a view to keep down the rate of wages.
1353. *First Statute of Præmunire*, against all appeals to Papal Courts.
1356. Battle of Poictiers.
Sir John Mandeville. [peasantry.
1358-9. The "*Jacquerie*," or insurrection of the French
1360. John Ball, the mad socialist preacher of Kent.
Peace of Bretigny.
Adrianople becomes the capital of the Turks in Europe.
1361. Wycliffe is elected Master of Balliol.
1362. *The Vision of Piers the Ploughman* (Langland).
1362. Re-appearance of the Black Death.
Law-pleadings ordered to be in English.
366. Parliament repudiates Pope Urban's demand for arrears of tribute, and calls on Wycliffe at Oxford for a formal defence of this resolution.
1369. Third appearance of the Black Death.
The French burn Portsmouth.
Wycliffe accepts the living of Ludgarshall.

A.D.

1371. The Commons petition against the appointment of ecclesiastical dignitaries to the great offices of State.
1372. Wycliffe takes his Doctor's degree.
1372. Spaniards destroy English Fleet off Rochelle.
1374. Wycliffe appointed to the living of Lutterworth (April).
1374. *Bruges Conference* (July). Wycliffe one of the Royal Commissioners.
1376. The Good Parliament meets to reform abuses, but breaks up in July owing to death of Black Prince.
Wycliffe accused by the Friars, first before the Bishops, and then before the Pope.
1377. Wycliffe's tract "De Dominio," defending the decision of the Parliament which refused Urban's renewed demand in 1374.
1377. (January) Papal Court returns from Avignon to Rome.
(February 19th) Wycliffe cited to appear in St Paul's.
(May) 5 Papal Bulls issued at Rome against Wycliffe, addressed to the various authorities in Church and State.
The University of Oxford reports substantially in favour of the soundness of Wycliffe's opinions.
Wycliffe sets on foot his order of "poor priests."
1377. (June 21) Death of Edward III.
Wycliffe consulted by Parliament as to payment of Peter's pence.
1378. Wycliffe cited to Lambeth. Death of Gregory XI. Beginning of "*The Great Schism*" (September).
1379. Wycliffe on "*The Truth of Scripture.*" He is now preparing his translation of the Bible, and further organising his mission-priests.
1380. The obnoxious poll-tax.
1380. Wycliffe's Theses against the logical validity of the doctrine of Transubstantiation.
1381. (June) Outbreak of *Peasants' War.*
1382. The Earthquake-Synod at Black Friars. Wycliffe, by petition to Parliament, appeals against its findings.
English Bible completed.
1384. Death of Wycliffe.
1390. *Final Statute of Provisors.*

A.D.

1393. *Final Statute of Præmunire.*
1401. Statute enacting the burning of heretics.
1408. Archbishop Arundel's Constitutions forbidding (*inter alia*) unauthorised Bibles.
1414. Council of Constance.
Lollard Act, extending provisions of the Act of 1401.
1415. Huss burnt at the stake.
1431. Council of Basel.
1438. Pragmatic sanction of Charles VII. of France.
1450. Jack Cade's rebellion, for redress of grievances.
1453. Capture of Constantinople by the Turks.
1455-85. Dynastic Wars of the Roses.
1485. Several accused persons burnt at Coventry as Lollards.
1489. Birth of Thomas Cranmer.
1491. Savonarola in Florence.
1492. Pope Alexander VI.
1505. Colet Dean of St Paul's.
1506. Foundation stone laid of the new St Peter's at Rome.
1508. Michael Angelo begins to decorate the Sistine Chapel.
1509. Henry VIII. comes to throne.
1510-16. Raphael's cartoons.
1513. Pope Leo X.
1516. *First Edition of Erasmus' New Testament.*
More's "*Utopia.*"
1517. Publication of Luther's Theses against Indulgences.
1520. Cardinal Ximenes' *Complutensian Polyglot.*
Lutheran books begin to be imported into England.
Luther burns the Pope's Bull.
1521. Henry VIII.'s treatise against Luther.
Lutheran books burnt at St Paul's.
Luther excommunicated.
1522. Luther's New Testament in German.
1522-4. Peasants' War and Nobles' War in Germany.
1525. (February) Emperor defeats France at Battle of Pavia.
Tyndale's New Testament.
1525. Society of the "*Christian Brethren*" founded (Froude's *History*, ii., 26).
1526. Geneva declares her political independence.

A.D.

1526. (February 11) Recantation of R. Barnes at St Paul's, and burning of Lutheran books.
(October) The Primate and the Bishop of London order Tyndale's Testaments, which had begun to be detected, to be burnt.

1527. Spread of Lutheran opinions in Oxford and Cambridge.
Henry VIII. inclines to a divorce.
Sack of Rome by forces of Charles V.

1527-9. *The German-Swiss or Zurich Bible.*

1528. *Latin Bible of Pagninus.*

1529. Diet of Spires. Lutheran princes and cities adopt the name of "Protestants."
Summoning of the Anti-Papal seven years' Parliament.
Fall of Wolsey. More made Chancellor.

1530. *Tyndale's Pentateuch.* Confession of Augsburg. Death of Wolsey.

1530. Royal Proclamation against heretical books, coupled with conditional promise of an English Bible.
Great holocaust of heretical books at St Paul's.
Protestant League of Schmalkald.

1531. The "Supremacy" of the King recognised by the Convocations.

1532. *The submission of the clergy.*
Macchiavelli's "*Prince*" published.
Death of Archbishop Warham.

1533. (January) Henry VIII. privately married to Anne Boleyn.

1533. Cranmer Archbishop of Canterbury (March 30th).
Act in restraint of appeals to Rome.

1533. Henry's marriage canonically celebrated.
Cromwell "rules everything." (Chapuis.)

1534. *Act embodying the submission of the clergy.*
Act of Supremacy.
Fisher and More sent to the Tower.
Cranmer and the Convocations petition for an English Bible. *Tyndale revises his New Testament and Pentateuch translations.*

1534-5. *Sebastian Münster's Latin Version of the Old Testament.*

A.D.

1534-5. *Tyndale's final revision of the New Testament* (known as the "G. H.").

1535. *Olivetan's French Bible.*
Execution of Fisher and More.

1535. *Coverdale's Bible reaches England.*
Cromwell made ecclesiastical Vicegerent.
Visitation of the Monasteries.

1535. Conference of Henry's envoys with Lutherans in Saxony.

1536. Death of Catherine (January).
The Pilgrimage of Grace; being the revolt of the North of England against Cromwellism.
Execution of Anne Boleyn (May 19th).
The "*Ten Articles*," marking the highest point of Protestant influence during Henry's reign.
Calvin's "*Institutes*."

1536. Suppression of the lesser Monasteries.
Geneva adopts Protestantism under Calvin.
Tyndale burnt at Vilvorde, October 6th.
Convocation renews petition for an English Bible, being dissatisfied with Coverdale's version.

1537. *Matthew's and Coverdale's Bibles licensed.*
The Bishops' Book.

1538. Cromwell's injunctions.
Lutheran delegates sent to England for a conference as to a possible religious agreement. Tunstall and Gardiner hostile—failure of negotiations.

1539. Dissolution of the greater Monasteries.
Act of the "*Six Articles*," indicating the reaction towards Catholicism.

1539. *The Great Bible* (Cromwell's), 1st Edition.

1540. Henry VIII. marries Anne of Cleves, January 6th.
Foundation of the Order of Jesuits.
Execution of Cromwell, July 28th.
Burning of Barnes and others for heresy.
Great Bible, 2nd Edition, *with Cranmer's Preface.*
Henry marries Catherine Howard, July 28th.

1543. The King's Book.
Restrictions as to the public and private reading of the Bible.

A.D.

1543. The Copernican System published.
1544. The Litany in English.
1545. Council of Trent, first session.
1546. Death of Luther.
Statutory restriction of 1543 now made to include the Coverdale Bible (July 8th).
Wholesale destruction of Bibles.
1547. (January) Death of Henry VIII.
Accession of Edward VI.
1548. "*Order of the Communion*" in English.
1548-9. Erasmus' "*Paraphrase*" set up in Churches.
1549. First Prayer Book of Edward VI.
Bucer, a moderate Lutheran, made Professor of Theology at Cambridge.
Peter Martyr, a Calvinist, made Professor of Theology at Oxford.
1550. John à Lasco, a Calvinist, made director of the foreign Protestants in London.
1551. *Castalio's Latin Bible.*
John Knox made a royal chaplain.
1552. Second Prayer Book of Edward VI.
1553. Death of Edward VI., July 6th.
(October) Coronation of Mary Tudor.
1554. (July) Mary marries Philip II. of Spain.
1554-5. The troubles at Frankfort.
The Marian persecutions begin in England.
1555. Religious compromise of Augsburg—"Cujus regio ejus religio"—(September 26th).
1555-8. Martyrdom of Cranmer, Hooper, Ridley, Latimer, and nearly 300 others.
1557. *The Genevan New Test. in English*, by Whittingham.
1558. Death of Mary Tudor, and accession of Elizabeth on November 17th.
1559. (January 12th) Coronation of Elizabeth.
Cecil made the Queen's chief adviser.
Treaty of Cateau Cambresis (April). Secret agreement between France and Spain for extermination of heretics.
Acts of Supremacy and of Uniformity.

A.D.

1559. (December) Parker made Archbishop.
1560. Protestantism established in Scotland.
The Genevan Bible.
1561. Birth of Francis Bacon.
1562. Religious Wars in France.
1563. The Thirty-nine Articles settled by Convocation.
Foxe's Book of Martyrs.
1564. Birth of Shakespeare.
1566. Revolt of the Netherlands.
Vestment controversy reaches its height, and the malcontents are branded as "Precisians," or Puritans.
1568. *The Bishops' Bible.*
1570. Excommunication of Elizabeth. Anglo-Roman Schism.
1572. Cartwright's declaration. Presbyterianism announced to be a divine institution.
Massacre of St Bartholomew (August 24th).
1579. *Latin Old Testament by Tremellius.* (The New Testament was completed soon afterwards.)
1580. Cartwright's Book of Discipline.
1581. Jesuit mission to England.
United Provinces declare their independence.
1582. *The Rheims* (*Douai*) *New Testament.*
Hakluyt's Voyages.
1586. The Babington plot against Elizabeth.
1587. Execution of Mary, Queen of Scots (February 8th).
1588. *Martin Marprelate* libels.
The Armada (July, August).
1590. The "*Faerie Queen.*"
1594. Hooker's "*Ecclesiastical Polity.*"
1595. Lambeth Articles.
1597. Bacon's "*Essays.*"
1598. Edict of Nantes (April 30th).
1602. "*Othello*" played at Court.
1603. Death of Elizabeth; accession of James I. (Mar. 24th).
1604. Hampton Court Conference.
1605. Gunpowder Plot.
Bacon's "*Advancement of Learning.*"
1606. "*Macbeth*" and "*Lear*" played at Court.
1608. Birth of Milton.

A.D.

1609-10. *Douai Old Testament.*

1611. "*Tempest*" played at Court.

"*Authorised Version*" published.

1613. "*Henry VIII.*" played at Court.

Close of Shakespeare's public career, and transition from the Elizabethan England of the Renaissance to Puritan England.

1616. Death of Shakespeare.

A TABULAR VIEW OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

The Bible before the Invention of Printing.

I. A.D. 597-1382—The Middle Ages — Metrical Paraphrases, Glosses, and Translations from the Latin Vulgate* and from the so called "Old Latin."

II. A.D. 1382—The Wycliffe-Hereford Bible.
A.D. 1388—A Revision of the above Bible, by Purvey and others.†

The Printed Bible of the Sixteenth Century.

III. A.D. 1525—Tyndale's New Testament . . — From the original Greek and Hebrew.

A.D. 1530 — Tyndale's (part of the) Old Testament . . . . — From the original Greek and Hebrew.

A.D. 1535 and A.D. 1537 — Coverdale's Bible (the first complete Bible in English) . . — *Not* from the Greek and Hebrew.

A.D. 1537—Matthew's Bible . . . . — Mainly a compilation from Tyndale and Coverdale.

A.D. 1539—Taverner's Bible . . . — A private revision of Matthew's, and comparatively unimportant.

A.D. 1539 — The first edition of the Great Bible; the second edition of which (with Cranmer's Preface), is dated 1540.

A.D. 1560—The Genevan Bible.
A.D. 1568—The Bishops' Bible.
A.D. 1582—The Rheims New Testament (from the Vulgate).

The Seventeenth Century.

IV. A.D. 1610—The Douai Old Testament (from the Vulgate).
A.D. 1611—The Authorised Version.

The Nineteenth Century.

V. A.D. 1881—The Revised New Testament.
A.D. 1885—The Revised Old Testament.
A.D. 1895—The Apocrypha.

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* See Appendix A.

† It is to be noted that these Bibles were translations of a translation—namely, of the Vulgate; and also, that, by their adoption of a type of language familiar to the common people, they helped to fix the diction of all subsequent versions long after their own form of English had become antiquated and out of date.

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INTRODUCTORY

Δεῖ γὰρ ἴσως ὑποτυπῶσαι πρῶτον, εἶθ ὕστερον ἀναγράψαι·
—*Arist. Ethics.*

For it is, perhaps, the best way first to draw a sketch in outline, and then afterwards to fill it in.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

It would be difficult to name a subject more full of interest for an Englishman than the evolution, through a long series of revisions, of our national Bible.

Regarded as Scripture, as the message and revelation of God to man, it is to our religious consciousness and to our moral needs that the Bible, in whatever language, must always make its primary appeal. But our English Bible has also its historical side. Regarded as the greatest of English classics, and the most venerable of the national heirlooms, it is as Englishmen that we have learned to love it. By the bond of a common literary heritage it unites the whole English-speaking race. It throws back its ancient roots into a past from which we now stand removed by an interval of not less than twelve hundred years. It interweaves itself with the most momentous crises of the nation's fortunes. It is sealed with the blood of martyrs. It is hallowed and endeared to many a heart by memories of the old home days. It has quickened, moulded, and sustained what is best and strongest in our individual and corporate life. Bone of our literary bone, and flesh of our literary flesh, it has exercised upon English character an influence,

moral, social, and political, which it is not possible to measure. Unique in dignity, unique in grandeur, unique in stately simplicity, it is the noblest monument that we possess of the genius of our native tongue.

It is of this national Bible that we now propose to trace the history. When did we get it? Whence and how? Who were its first sponsors? What was it that originally suggested such a work? Was it born of some chance literary impulse, or shall we find it coming to meet us on the crest of some great religious wave?

In order to find answers to these and to other kindred questions, which will naturally occur to any one who approaches the subject as a comparative stranger, we shall have to pursue a path which at the outset is neither well-defined nor continuous, but which broadens out as we advance.

It is not till somewhat late on in English history that we come upon a complete vernacular version. Yet in one shape or another the Bible story has been among us from our national infancy. We need not, therefore, plead guilty to any spirit of antiquarian pedantry, nor to a weakness for "beginning the tale of the Trojan war from Leda's egg," if the chapter which next follows has been in part devoted to a preliminary survey of those fragmentary forms in which a native Bible begins to become dimly visible almost as the curtain rises on our history.

To this survey of the place occupied by the Bible in the Middle Ages, there has been added, in Chapter III., a brief sketch of its relation to Scholasticism in the university schools.

With Wycliffe and the versions which since the end of the fourteenth century have been associated with his name, we shall pass from the period of ecclesiastical tutelage to that of nascent independence; from the one Empire, and the one Church, to the many nations and many Churches, and shall make acquaintance with the earliest of English Bibles. From Wycliffe we shall go on to William Tyndale, to Miles Coverdale, and to the other translators of the Tudor period with whom begins that long series of Bibles to which the authorised and revised versions both equally belong. The next stage will introduce us to our golden age of creative inspiration, when Scholarship and Letters came forth to lay their united service at the feet of Religion, and to dedicate to her that famous book which has been the pride of England for now nearly three hundred years. Descending to more prosaic times, to this silver age of industrious research, it will be our concluding task to review the causes which led up to the long and patient labours of our last revisers, who, without claiming for their work a finality which is beyond human reach, may none the less prove to have been laying a firm and lasting foundation for that national and popular Bible for which we have still to look. Such an ideal Bible would be based on the purest attainable text; would be so printed as to be read with unmixed delight; and would have the seventeenth century translation of the text only so far revised as to satisfy the legitimate demands of a not too microscopic scholarship, while perpetuating, with a wise and chastened discretion, the beauties of the Authorised Version.

MEDIEVAL ENGLAND AND THE BIBLE

. . . A man may prophesy,
With a near aim, of the main chance of things
As yet not come to life, which in their seeds
And weak beginnings lie intreasured.

—*Henry IV.*, Part II., Act iii., Sc. 1.

CHAPTER II

MEDIEVAL ENGLAND AND THE BIBLE

It is proposed in the present chapter first to consider the working of certain influences which served to retard the translation of the Latin Bible of the Church into English, and next to gain some idea of the extent to which certain portions of that Bible had been brought within the reach of our forefathers, whether lay or clerical, before the last half of the fourteenth century.

Christianity, let us remember, first reached these shores as early as the second century, and its light was only temporarily eclipsed by the invasions of the heathen Teutons. Upon its reappearance at the close of the sixth century there followed an outburst of literary activity in Northumbria, to which, at that early date, no parallel can be found in any other country of the West. It may seem, therefore, at first sight a little difficult to understand why the Bible, as a whole, should have remained untranslated until the time of Wycliffe.

It is true, no doubt, that in this respect England was no worse off than her neighbours. We may

even say, that, with the exception of the Goths, we can point to no Teutonic people who came earlier into the possession of a vernacular Bible. Nay more; for, if we look closely into it, this very exception will be seen to be more apparent than real, inasmuch as Bishop Ulfilâs, who in the fourth century gave the Goths their native version, in a translation from the Greek of both Testaments, was a bishop not of the Western but of the Eastern Church.

But it is one thing to show that England formed no exception to the general practice of Western Christianity, and another thing to discover how that practice had come to be established. On one point, at any rate, there can be no doubt. Let its origin be what it may, it was not derived from the primitive Church. To the early Fathers, to St Chrysostom or Origen, to Augustine or Jerome, could they have come back to life, it would have seemed a reproach to Christianity that a nation of Teutonic speech should remain restricted to a Latin Bible. We find, accordingly, that by a very early period the Holy Scriptures had been translated into Syriac, Armenian, Egyptian, and into other Oriental tongues, as well as into Greek and Latin. Nor did the Eastern Church depart from the principle by which the undivided Church had been governed. She, too, afforded ample proof of her desire, that, for every nation within her communion where the Christian faith had made its way, these Scriptures in the vernacular should be made accessible to all alike.

Why is it, then, we naturally ask, that between

primitive and medieval Christianity, between the Church of the East and the Church of the West, so marked a contrast should exist. If Constantinople made no endeavour to impose a Greek Bible upon the Slavs, why should Rome have imposed a Latin Bible upon the English? Why should the Vulgate have been within its rights at Canterbury, while a Teutonic Bible would have been a trespasser at Rome? The problem is worth examination, and will repay a little attention.

The early introduction into this country of an English Bible might conceivably have been brought about in one or other of two ways. On the one hand, a demand might have asserted itself from below; or, on the other hand, the Church might have felt that in so important a matter it was her duty, as the one educational institution of the times, to take a strong initiative herself. But a little consideration will be sufficient to satisfy us, that, as a matter of fact, it was impossible that there should have been any demand for a translated Bible from below. For in Anglo-Saxon days, and even down to a far later period, there were very few persons outside the monasteries and chapters who could read their letters. Manuscripts, too, were scarce and costly, and it was only by hand that they could be multiplied. Under such circumstances an English Bible would have found no reading public ready to profit by it.

Still, as native converts multiplied, and as numbers of them passed through the schools connected with

the monasteries into the ranks of the clergy, the idea of a native Bible might well, it would seem, have suggested itself to the scholars and teachers of the Church. In the golden days of Northumbrian letters such a work could not have been beyond their powers. Why was it, then, that the Church held back? How are we to explain the fact, that, although for at least a hundred years before the coming of the destroying Danes, English literature flourished so vigorously in the North, and although it revived again, in the form of prose, with King Alfred in the South, yet no English Bible appeared before Wycliffe, and no English Liturgy before Cranmer?

It is evident that whatever the explanation may be, we cannot ascribe the delay either to any fear of heresy, of which there was not then so much as a whisper to be heard, or to any latent feeling of hostility on the part of the religious houses towards the Anglo-Saxon tongue itself. It is true, no doubt, that scholarship did not long remain at the high level which it reached in Bede; and true also that the general trend of monastic culture inclined more and more towards Latin. But, on the other hand, the home language was never at any time proscribed, or even kept at a distance. So far, indeed, was this from being the case, so far was Anglo-Saxon from being slighted as the uncouth speech of a race but just emerged from heathenism, that it was under the shelter of the Church itself that our native literature was encouraged to put forth its earliest shoots. We must turn elsewhere, therefore, for a solution.

May not one reason be that we hardly realise the in-

tensity of devotion with which the Vulgate was regarded? May it not be that a new departure, which to us seems now so natural and obvious, would have struck the mind of a medieval monk as a wanton innovation on an order of things which in his eyes stood consecrated by immemorial prescription? Does not the very conception of a national Bible, like that of a national Liturgy, carry us out of the medieval period of tutelage and tend to associate itself with the kindred ideas of national individuality and national independence?

And if such be the case—if the possession by a people of the Scriptures in their own mother tongue involves either a recognition, or at least a prophecy, of spiritual emancipation and of intellectual adolescence—we begin to see the matter in a different light. For in the Middle Ages the principal of ecclesiastical unity was of all principles the most self-evident and the most axiomatic.* The belief in the one Empire and the one Church, in the World-Priest and in the World-Monarch, was the most deeply-seated conviction of the times. Notwithstanding that discordance between the theoretical and the actual which is so striking a characteristic of the medieval world, it stamps and pervades the entire period which lies before us throughout the present chapter. And the dethronement of the official Latin Bible by a vernacular version would have seemed to be an insidious attack on the authority and catholicity of the West.

* See Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*, Fourth Edition (1873), p. 106.

Let us bring to mind for a moment the position towards which Rome had already begun to aspire, a position to the consolidation of which the forgery of the False Decretals in the ninth century was so powerfully to contribute.

Gregory the Great, from whose side Augustine came, was no doubt perfectly sincere when he denounced, as nothing less than flat blasphemy, the claim of his brother patriarch of Constantinople to the title of "Universal Bishop." But his sincerity interferes in no way with the fact that the tide of events was already running rapidly that way, only that Rome, and not Constantinople, was marked out as the future seat of spiritual empire. No sooner had the Roman bishops been set free from secular control than they began to see visions and to dream dreams of sovereignty. The transfer to the East of the imperial throne was an event by which the ecclesiastical supremacy of the West was made ultimately inevitable. In part Rome achieved greatness, and in part she had greatness thrust upon her. Step by step the Patriarch expanded into the Pope, and the natural primacy of the chief bishop into the divinely constituted authority of the representative and lineal successor of St Peter. Christendom required a head, and the natural head was Rome. Upon the shoulders of the Papacy had fallen the mantle of the dying Empire, and she bore towards the converted the same relation that Cæsarism had borne towards the conquered. Her traditions, her instincts, her aspirations, her ambitions, had all been cast in a mould which was neither local nor national, but catholic and

universal. It is not difficult to see the bearing of such an institution as this on the question of a national Bible. The majestic dignity, the absolute claims, of the medieval Church could not but be reflected back upon the character of her sacred books. As there was but one Church, one Pope, one Faith, so also must it have seemed part of the universal order that there should be one consecrated language in which that Faith should rest enshrined, and in which that Church should offer up to God her worship. To break in upon the order, to throw the hallowed and stately diction of the Vulgate—that Vulgate which after violent and prolonged opposition had come to command a reverence not far removed from actual idolatry—into the rude dialect of a half barbarous people scarcely yet redeemed from Paganism, may well have seemed something so intolerable as to savour strongly of actual profanation.

It is natural that our first feeling should be one of regret that a different course was not adopted. But there is at least one ground on which, as Hallam long since pointed out,* we may feel deeply thankful. For when the old world fell to pieces, the Church was the one and only institution which survived the general wreck. Unless this Church had thrown a halo of sanctity over the Latin tongue by retaining it as the language of her Bible and of her worship, as well as the channel of her diplomatic intercourse, her ecclesiastical administration, and her religious study, the fate of classical learning must inevitably have been sealed.

* Hallam's *Middle Ages*, Fifth Edition (1829), vol. iii., pp. 335-8.

These considerations may in some degree serve to reconcile for us the friendly attitude of the Church towards the vernacular literature with her accompanying sense of the sacredness and inviolability of the Latin scriptures and liturgy. But there were other causes at work which helped to delay anything beyond fragmentary translations, and in order to understand in what they consisted we must turn to the world of practical life.

In the mission-field of Latin Christianity the activity of the representatives of the Church was necessarily conditioned by the nature of the material with which they had to deal. In Anglo-Saxon England it was not until the work of Theodore and of Adrian had been done, that religion, towards the end of the seventh century, ceased to be tribal and migratory, and began to settle slowly down into an organisation which was fixed and territorial, and into an ecclesiastical unity which was the foster-nurse of the monarchy. Archbishop Theodore had found the country a mere loose chain of scattered monasteries and mission-stations, the Italian mission having its centre at Canterbury, and the Celtic mission at Iona. At his death, in 690 A.D., there had been organised a national and episcopal Church, established on a parochial basis, and endowed with a staff of resident pastors. But it was a Church whose members were as yet anything but ripe for a vernacular Bible.

The educated clergy were content with their Vulgate, and neither the Anglo-Saxon kings nor their lay subjects would, as a rule, have been able to make

anything of a written manuscript. Nor would a Saxon Bible have been of much service to the mass-priests, or country-clergy, who stood between the illiterate population and the monks. Even if their education had been less rudimentary than it was, they could have had but little leisure for Bible-reading, while expensive manuscripts would have been quite beyond their means. It was no literary task which lay before them in those rough days, but one of a wholly different nature, and a task, moreover, which was arduous enough to tax all the energy that they could devote to it. It was the task of taming the wild beast in the Saxon nature; the task, in an age of violence and lawlessness, of disciplining their converts through the power of example, of sympathy, and of self-sacrifice; the task, in a word, of organisation, of authority, and of moral government. What the Church had to do, writes Bishop Westcott,

"was to subdue new races, to mould a Christian Society, to vindicate the majesty of Divine Law in the face of barbarous despotism, to witness to the reality of the eternal and the unseen in the face of rude passion and brute force." *

There is still one further aspect of the matter which should not be overlooked. The Bible was not for our medieval ancestors what it is for us. In any endeavour, therefore, to understand the influences which may be conceived to have actuated their Church, we must be on our guard against anachronisms. For we are apt, though unconsciously, to carry back ideas and feelings which belong to our own times into an age when they were unknown. To men of the present day the Bible

* *The Bible in the Church* (1889), p. 191.

comes with a set of certain well-defined historical associations. We cannot altogether disconnect our conception of it from the position which properly belongs to it in Reformation times. By a natural train of ideas it contrasts itself in our minds with "Tradition." It allies itself with an intellectual and moral disposition, with a way of looking at and thinking about religious questions, which, since Protestantism is rather a temper than a creed, may be described as Protestant or individualistic. It is necessary, therefore, to beware of losing our historical perspective. The Bible, so far as regards an apprehension of its moral and spiritual value, was one thing for men of the intellectual stamp of Wycliffe, or Tyndale, or Cranmer; and quite another thing for men of an earlier day, such as Gregory and Bede. For the wants of the medieval mind lay in a wholly different plane from the wants of the Reformation mind. It was not the open Bible towards which the England of the monks naturally inclined. Medievalism asked not for a book but for religion externalised in an institution. The age was one not of reflection but of faithful and undiscriminating obedience. It found its full satisfaction in the rule and guidance of the visible Church. It was this visible Church which kept the keys of heaven and hell, and to which the custody of the Holy Scriptures had been entrusted. In this Church, and in her alone, the religious ideal of those times found its full realisation. Too ignorant for doubt, too uncritical and superstitious for a reasoned faith, inert and torpid

under the numbing influence of an incurious acquiescence, men gratefully accepted at the hands of a nursing mother the spiritual sustenance which was best adapted to their intellectual childhood.

It may assist us to take an illustration. If we were to be asked at the present day what we conceived to be the central fact of the Bible, we should point at once to the personality of Jesus Christ. But in the worship of the Middle Ages the figure of the Redeemer had almost receded out of sight. "Pray first," (so the worshipper was bidden,)

> "Pray first to St Mary, and the Holy Apostles, and the Holy Martyrs, and to all God's Saints . . . and end by signing yourself, and by singing your Pater Noster."*

Christ was to be sought and found not in the Bible but in the mass, and it was only through the sacraments that the human soul could be permitted to approach Him.

It was not, then, in a spiritual but in a sensuous, in a symbolic, and in a materialised form that the Church in those far-distant days presented her teaching. So low indeed had sunk the general mental level that men were well-nigh incapable of any abstract conceptions at all. Religion, accordingly, tended more and more to resolve itself into a mere piety of ritual, and into a mechanical system of external observances. There was a craving for the concrete, the visible, the pictorial; for something which the bodily senses could readily apprehend; for ideals embodied in institutions;

* Thorpe's *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England* (1840), vol. ii., p. 425.

for shrines and relics; for ornate services; for an imposing ceremonial. The Virgin and the Saints, as being in nearer touch with man than the more awful personalities of the Trinity, were invited to perform what Holy Scripture had defined to be the mediatorial work of the Saviour. The Bible, as the story of the redeeming love of a Father, had more and more faded out of view, while allegory and legend had substituted in its place a miscellany of Christianised mythology. Between the educated and the uneducated, between the clergy and laity, there stood interposed the double barrier of a priestly class and of a foreign tongue. Such, to use the terminology of these modern scientific days, was the "psychological climate" of the Middle Ages, and it is plain that it was not of a character to inspire men with any personal interest in the question of an open Bible.

We are now, perhaps, more nearly in a position to understand why the Latin Bible which accompanied the monks from Rome should have enjoyed so long a reign.

It was maintained, then, in the first place, because its maintenance was in full harmony with the spirit and genius of Latin Christianity. It was maintained, in the second place, because whereas the work of translation is essentially a literary task, and needs both some adequate motive to inspire it and a public to give it welcome, the Church of those early centuries was confronted with the great practical problem of discipline, while there was as yet neither any such inspiring motive nor any such reading public. It was maintained, lastly, because that sense of the value of an open Bible which is so prominent a

feature in Teutonic Christianity either formed no part of the medieval consciousness, or, if present to it at all, was yet dwarfed into relative insignificance by an all but universal belief in the mediatorial efficacy of the ordinances of the Church apart from the individual responsibilities and moral life of her children.

In this jealous retention of the Latin tongue, the Church, from her own point of view, was amply justified. Latin was an indispensable link in the chain by which Christianity, as then understood, was moored to the contemporary world of thought and action. It was mainly by the exclusive use of one and the same ecclesiastical language that the unity of Christendom, religious, official, and diplomatic, was kept cemented. Clearly, therefore, it was of vital importance that no new literary pretender should be permitted to endanger a monopoly on whose preservation so much was felt to depend.

The apprehension of such a danger was indeed no empty dream. Looking onward from earlier times to the developments of the fourteenth century, we find the centrifugal and self-asserting spirit of nationality busy in the consolidation of the secular State, and in moulding into literary form the languages of a new world. And even as we watch, the venerable unity of the Latin Church is seen slowly dissolving away, while there falls upon the ear the death-knell of the Middle Age, and the footfall of the Renaissance.

Thus far we have been mainly occupied with the influence of the Latin element in the history of the preparatory period now under consideration. It is

time to approach the subject from its other side, and to turn to the Teutonic element in that history.

When, in the person of Augustine, Rome revisited the country which she had in times past administered for some four hundred years as a Celtic province, she found herself among a people who had been in no degree Romanised. Unlike the Franks and the Goths, the Saxons had never felt the magic of the Roman name and influence. They knew nothing of Roman modes of thought and feeling. Teutons in blood, in speech, and in religion, they were a loose aggregate of tribes to whom, under the Anglo-Saxon kings, their new island home, lying outside the boundaries of the Roman Empire and hidden away far beyond the confines of the West, had given a position of exceptional independence. Still their strong instinct of political liberty was not felt to be irreconcilable with due loyalty in their ecclesiastical obedience to Rome. As we unfold the scroll of our history, we may imagine ourselves to be watching the busy Saxon workshop in which the raw material necessary for the making of a home Bible is all the while being steadily fashioned. Such material lay ready to hand in the development of the English language and in the independence of the English character.

It was Wycliffe's Teutonic love of truth and freedom which moved him to give his countrymen the open Scriptures as their best safeguard and protection against the moral corruptions and bondage and obscurantism of Papal Rome; and it was the growth of the English language into a literary medium of expression, ripen-

ing for his work of translation as Italian had ripened for Dante, and as German was presently to grow ripe for Luther, which first made a people's Bible possible. Among the many claims which our national Bible has upon our veneration is the witness which is borne by its language and by its history to our imperishable instinct of race. Socially, politically, and ecclesiastically we owe much to the stimulating shock of successive invasions and conquests. But it is not by the grace alone of either Roman, Dane, or Norman that we are what we are to-day. It is mainly by the effectual working of that sturdy Saxon spirit which from the first has coursed so strongly in our blood.

The conversion of England to the Latin faith is sometimes pictured to us under a strange misapprehension of the facts. It is represented as though it had been of the nature of some sudden and startling transformation scene, or as if it might best be compared to the swift sweep of some huge tidal wave, pouring itself irresistibly over the land, and submerging at once and for ever the old Teutonic gods, the old customs, the old beliefs, the old everyday life, of our Pagan forefathers.

Very different was the actual progress of this new faith as we catch its reflection in our early annals. Although the adoption of Christianity by the tribal king carried with it the nominal acquiescence of the tribe itself, yet the moral change, at the best, was but of gradual and tardy growth. There was an intervening process of action and reaction, of ebb and flow, of success and failure; and it was only step by step, and before the

successive exertions of Roman, Celt, and Greek;—of Augustine, of Aidan, and of Theodore—that Woden gave place to Christ. Not by persecution, but by gentleness and persuasion, by preaching and teaching, by the moral power of devoted lives, by the prestige and splendour of Latin Christianity, the fierce Saxon warriors were attracted, tamed, and won.

The policy which, through his letters, Gregory was careful to impress upon his mission, was in the main a policy of conciliation and compromise. The sturdy stock of our Teutonic parentage was not recklessly and suddenly hewn down by foreign axes to make room for an alien growth. On the contrary, the new was so gradually grafted upon the old, that, in the more remote districts, remnants of the ancient Paganism lingered sullenly on for centuries. The change which little by little came over the country was effected rather by tactful adaptation than by revolution. The old Adam of the Teuton was not all in a moment washed away by the waters of baptism. Just as the feasts of Eostre-tide and Yule-tide became, after a while, the Easter and Christmas of the Church; just as while the months of the year preserved the nomenclature of Rome, the divinities whom Penda worshipped lived on as the tutelary guardians of the days of the Christian week; just as the temple in the grove survived within bow-shot of the church upon the hill, and the Holy Rood just alongside of the sacred tree; so, too, the native language and the native character of the convert were welcomed by the monks into their service, and were made instrumental to the furtherance of their evangelis-

ing work. Under the encouragement and protection of the Church a home-born literature grew up during the seventh and eighth centuries as the lowly handmaid of religion, and the heathen bard became transformed, under the inspiration of a nobler creed, into the Christian poet.

Such a poet was Caedmon, the Amos of English literature, a poet probably of mixed Celtic and Saxon blood, and the earliest of our English singers. To the music of his native harp the Bible-story, in the form of a poetic paraphrase, begins to pass out of its old Latin into its new English dress, out of the dim seclusion of cell and school to the open sunlight of the countryside, and from the narrow limits of the parchment-scroll to the wandering minstrelsy of the vernacular poetry.

Caedmon's date is the latter part of the seventh century, and his poetry was in truth the only Bible of the Anglo-Saxons.* In a sense, therefore, he belongs almost as much to the history of the English Bible as to the history of English literature. Little is known about his personality, and that little we learn entirely from Bede. An illiterate peasant of Northumbria, he worked as a farm-labourer in the employ of the bailiff of the great Abbey of Whitby, known at that time as "Streane-shalch." The Lady-Abbess was the Princess Hild, a convert who had received baptism at the hands of Paulinus, the Apostle of Northumbria, and one of Augustine's little band.

The ancient abbey stood high up on the cliff just

* *English Writers*, by Henry Morley (1888), vol. ii., p. 71.

where the abbey church of Whitby stands to-day. Doubtless there was some underlying basis of fact for the legendary story which we owe to Bede, and which reminds us of the call of Hesiod to the service of the Muses on the slopes of Mount Helicon. The poetry which had so long lain hidden in the heart of one of the unlettered dependents of the monastery may well have been quickened into utterance by the vitalising breath of Christianity. For Bede, however, who was but a child when Caedmon died, the wonder-working spirit of the times has shed the lustre of the supernatural over a tale which even without its aid would have been sufficiently remarkable.

Caedmon had passed the term of middle life without having shown any signs of poetic genius. It had been his habit, at the festive gatherings in the great mead-hall, when the harp came round to him and it was his turn to sing, to rise from his seat and leave the feast, either because he knew not how to sing, or because the rough war-songs of the Saxon bards were no longer to his taste. One night when this had happened, and he had gone out to look after the horses and the cattle, he fell asleep in the stable buildings, and as he slept he heard a voice saying, "Caedmon, sing to me." And he said, "I cannot sing, and for that reason I have come away from the feast." And again the voice was in his ears, "Caedmon, sing to me;" and he answered, "What shall I sing?" "Sing to me the first beginning of created things." So the words came unbidden to his lips, and in his dream he sang his hymn of praise to God the Creator. Whether we have the hymn just

as he sang it is not certain, but the sense of the opening lines is as follows:—

"Now must we praise the Maker of the Celestial Kingdom, the power and counsel of the Creator, the deeds of the Father of Glory, how he, since he is the Eternal God, was the beginning of all wonders, who first, Omnipotent Guardian of the human kind, made for the sons of men Heaven for their roof, and then the earth."*

And in the morning he told the wonder to the bailiff, and the bailiff brought him up to the Lady Hild. And when sufficient trial had been made of him, it was found that he had indeed the divine gift. For no sooner had any portion of the Bible-story been translated to him out of Latin by the monks, than he forthwith sang it to the accompaniment of his harp in the short alliterative lines of Saxon verse.

At the invitation of the abbess he now put off the secular habit, received a welcome into the company of the brethren, and became duly instructed in the entire course of sacred history. "And he turned into sweetest song," continues Bede, "all that he could learn from hearing it, and he made his teachers his listeners. His song was of the creation of the world, of the birth of man, of the history of Genesis. He sang, too, the Exodus of Israel from Egypt, and their entrance into the promised land, and many other of the narratives of Holy Scripture. Of the incarnation also did he sing, and of the passion; of the resurrection and ascension into heaven; of the coming of the Holy Spirit, and the teaching of the apostles . . .; in all of which he tried to

* Stopford Brooke, *History of Early English Literature*, ii., 72.

draw men from wicked ways to the love of well-doing. For he was a most religious man."*

Bede's beautiful tale will at once be seen to be of the greatest interest and significance. The details of Caedmon's poetry lie outside our limits, but its rise and spread are closely connected with the subject of the English Bible. At a time when our rude ancestors were quite unqualified to receive instruction in a written form, portions of the Bible-story began to be sung in their ears in the well-known strains of that old Teutonic minstrelsy which was their delight, and even in the very terms of the familiar Saxon warfare. For, in the poetry of the Caedmonic cycle, the Abraham of Hebrew history will be found figuring in battle as a genuine Saxon Atherling, while the Israelites themselves fight with all the savage fierceness of the hosts of Penda.

Nor was this minstrelsy confined to the monastic circle, but its songs were sung before the King and his warriors, and among the peasantry and artisans of the village and the homestead. Other and later poets, such as Cynewulf, seem to have caught something of Caedmon's primitive inspiration, though they sound a more reflective and self-conscious note than his. Through his means, and through theirs, the Scripture narratives circulated for many generations throughout the North, and the common folk acquired, in a form which fixed itself in their memories, a rudimentary Bible-knowledge to which, otherwise, they must for long have remained strangers.

This cycle of popular poetry was not restricted

* Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, iv., 24.

either to the Old Testament or to the New, for it is in the poems attributed to Caedmon, that, for the first time in England, we meet with the great legend of Satan, the leader of those rebellious angels who challenged the power and sovereignty of God, and were in consequence cast headlong out of heaven. Whence it was that this legend, made familiar to us all by Milton, may originally have been derived, it is not easy to say, nor is the passing allusion to it in the epistle of Jude of much help to us. Probably it may have worked its way from the far East through Alexandria into the West, but the question, full of interest though it be, is not one which could suitably be considered here.

The wide and enduring popularity of the religious vernacular poetry shows clearly the natural attraction which, especially in its narratives, the Bible must have had for the Teutonic imagination. Nor is there anything in this to cause surprise. For if on its lower side the Saxon temperament had its elements of fierceness, of coarseness, and of sensuality, it was not wanting in a higher side. Our ancestors brought over with them many a mental feature which developed itself, as time went on, and became more marked under the influence of a higher faith. Among such features we may point to their deep sense of the divine in nature, their grave moral earnestness, their loyalty, their practical turn of mind, their love of poetry and song, their wistful curiosity about the unseen world. All these combined together to form a complex consciousness which responded eagerly to the preaching of the monks, and to

the natural influence, upon wild untutored impulses, of the ordered austerity and self-effacement of the early monastic ideal while yet in its untarnished freshness. It was not long indeed before the monasteries began to degenerate into mere cities of refuge, within which men and women sought to escape from a world in which they had become either too effeminate, or too ascetic, or too indolent, to work and fight. But at first these scattered houses were the only local centres of spiritual life and light, the only fortresses which could give shelter to those single-hearted pioneers of Christianity who went forth, as "the chivalry of God," not to escape from, but to battle bravely with the world, and to redeem it as best they might from the bondage of ignorance and of sin.

While Caedmon was singing in the North, the popular poetry was being utilised in the South for the purpose of religious instruction by Aldhelm,* Abbot of Malmesbury. Impressed with the sense of how little the peasantry seemed to care for his English sermons, the good abbot, who was one of the most skilful musicians of his day, took up his position in the garb of a minstrel on a bridge over which they had to pass, and having first enthralled his audience by the sweetness with which he sang, he presently attuned his song to a religious note, and so by the magic spell of the Muses won over to a better life many an uncultured soul whom a homily would have only sent to sleep, and whom even the terrors of excommunication would have left lamentably unmoved.

* Aldhelm made a translation of the Psalter, but whether we now possess it is uncertain.

But it was not to the ear alone that the missionaries made their earliest appeal. The momentous decision of the Whitby Conference, in A.D. 664, had caused Northumbria to break with Iona and Celtic Christianity, and to follow the rule of Canterbury and Rome.* By that decision England lost much, but gained even more than she lost. She lost the fervour of Celtic enthusiasm, and the earnest simplicity of the Celtic missionary spirit. But the Celt was better suited to win converts than to train and manage them when won. Through Rome England gained the power of organisation, the power to develop herself into a national Church, while she was preserved from the sterility and narrowness which are born of spiritual isolation. The local centre of gravity was transferred from the monastery to the bishop, the unity which was an indispensable condition of her advancement was made possible, and the infant Church, now become once for all an integral part of the religious system of the West, was placed in permanent touch with what remained of Roman civilisation and culture. The change soon made itself felt in many ways, and in none more significantly than in the rich embellishment and beautification of church interiors.

Benedict Biscop, Abbot of Wearmouth towards the close of the seventh century, brought over from Rome a number of religious paintings, which he arranged in his churches so as to present to the wandering and curious eyes of those who were unable to read, the chief scenes in the lives of patriarchs and of apostles, of the Virgin and of Jesus.

* Green's *History of the English People* (1877), vol. i., pp. 56-7.

"The most illiterate peasant could not enter the church without receiving profitable instruction. He beheld the lovable face of Christ and His Saints, or learned from looking at them the important mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption, or he was induced by the sight of the Last Judgment to descend into his own breast and to deprecate the anger of the Almighty." *

In this manner was the story of the Bible gently yet forcibly brought home to ignorant worshippers from the countryside through the ministry of poetry and art, and a kind of rude preparation made for the miracle-plays, the religious drama, and the *Biblia Pauperum* of later centuries. But the peasantry were not the only class who in these early days were calling for an interpreter. As converts multiplied, so did the need increase for parish priests to minister among them and to teach them, while to the large majority of such native clergy Latin would naturally be an unknown tongue. Bede speaks of these native clergy as "*Sacerdotes idiotæ*," by which he means priests who knew only Anglo-Saxon, and he tells us that it was mainly for their guidance and use that he often busied himself, and that he encouraged other scholars to busy themselves, in translating into the vernacular the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. As bearing on this point we may quote an injunction to parish priests which appears in the canons of Ælfric, Abbot of Ensham, in the century before the Norman invasion :—

"The mass-priest shall on Sundays and mass days tell to the people the sense of the Gospel *in English*, and so too of the Pater Noster and the Creed. Blind is the teacher if he know not book-learning."

* Bede's *Life of the Abbot of Wearmouth.*

It is to be feared, however, that this not very exalted standard was often far above the attainment of the country parson of the tenth century.

Bede also translated into Anglo-Saxon the Gospel of St John, and perhaps we may infer from his selection of the fourth gospel for his purpose that the three earlier ones had been translated already. In him, therefore, we have the first link in the chain of translators, which, through Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, and their successors in the continuous work of revision, binds the eighth to the nineteenth century in the history of the English Bible. Cuthbert, one of Bede's devoted followers, has told us the story of the completion of his master's labours, and a very touching story it is.* Through the whole of the Eve of Ascension Day, 735 A.D., the grand old monk of Jarrow, the ablest scholar of his time in Europe, had been dictating, though with waning strength, his vernacular version of St John. Evening came on, and then the night, but there still remained one chapter untranslated. "Most dear master," they reminded him when morning broke, "there is one chapter yet to do." "Take then your pen," he said, "and write quickly." The spirit indeed was willing but the flesh was fast failing, and one by one the brethren came to his bedside to say their last farewells. Then, as darkness again began to close in, the little scribe whose place it was to be near him bent down and whispered, "Master, even now there is one sentence more," and he answered him, "Write on fast." And the boy wrote on and cried, "See, dear master, it is finished now." "Yes,"

* *Cuthbert's Letter to Cuthwine.*

murmured the dying Saint, "you speak well, it is finished now. Take therefore my head into your hands and lay me down opposite my holy place, where it was my wont to pray." And so, on the pavement of his little cell, they laid him down, and with the "Gloria" on his lips the aged monk delivered up his spirit, and departed hence to the heavenly kingdom.

Nothing has come down to us of Bede's English work. No doubt it perished together with many other treasures of the Northumbrian monasteries when the Danes laid the land waste.

Passing onwards to the latter part of the ninth century, we have had preserved to us an English Psalter, now in the Cotton Collection at the British Museum, not written out in an independent form, but "interlineated," as it is called, with a seventh century Latin manuscript of the Psalms, according to the *Roman* Psalter, which is believed to have been the identical copy sent over by Gregory for the use of Augustine soon after his arrival in Kent.

Religious life was nearly extinct when Alfred the Great gave all his energies to the revival of a native literature.

"I thought I saw," says the King in the preface to his translation of the Pastoral of Pope Gregory, "how, before all was spoiled and burnt, the churches were filled with treasures of books, yet but little fruit was reaped of them, for men could understand nothing of them, as they were not written in their own native tongue. Few persons south of the Humber could understand the services in English or translate Latin into English. I think there were not many who could do so beyond the Humber, and none to the south of the Thames."

We must not linger over the version of the Decalogue which this splendid King, in his characteristic spirit of religious reference, places at the head of his Book of Laws, or on his unfinished version of the Psalms, and we travel on accordingly to notice certain notable translations of the Gospels, all of which date from about this period.

The earliest of them, like the Psalter just referred to, is in interlinear form,—that is to say, it is a word-for-word rendering of a Latin original, in which each English term is as far as possible placed under its Latin equivalent. The interlineation, as distinguished from the original document, was made, as experts tell us, in the tenth century, and is in the dialect of Northumbria.

A special interest attaches to this version, a survival of bygone centuries, which may now be seen in the British Museum.* The Anglo-Saxon translator describes himself therein as "Aldred," *miserrimus et indignissimus*, a priest of Holy Isle, and the date of his work is considered to be not later than the middle of the tenth century. The Latin manuscript which he uses as his basis is the famous volume known under the various names of "*The Lindisfarne Gospels*"; "*The Book of Durham*"; and "*The Gospels of St Cuthbert.*" The writer of it was Eadfrith, Bishop of Lindisfarne; and the manuscript belonged at one time to Durham Cathedral, and is supposed to have been in use by no less a person than St Cuthbert. It has been inferred with great probability, from internal evidence, that the

* *Cotton MS.*, Nero, D. iv.

Bishop copied the Gospels, towards the end of the seventh century, from a Latin version which Adrian, the friend and companion of Archbishop Theodore, had brought with him to England in 669 A.D. The present binding in gilt and precious stones is quite modern, being the gift in 1853 of the Bishop of Durham.

The Latin, like the Latin from which all these tenth century interlineations are derived, is not identical with that which we find in the text of the Vulgate. It belongs to the far more primitive Latin versions of the Bible which are known collectively as the "Old Latin."* Great, therefore, is the interest which lies in the reflection that these Gospels take us back as far even as the middle or end of the second century, a date earlier by many generations than that of our oldest surviving uncial manuscripts of the New Testament.

Eadfrith's work was done in honour of St Cuthbert's memory, and the manuscript itself, exquisitely bound, was buried at Lindisfarne with the body of the Saint. Towards the end of the ninth century both book and body were carried off by the monks to Ireland, to escape violation at the hands of the marauding Danes. From Ireland they were shifted hither and thither, until at last they found their way back to Lindisfarne, and, when the monastery there was finally dissolved, these precious Gospels, with Aldred's gloss written between their lines, were purchased by Sir Robert Cotton, and are now included in his priceless collection at the Museum in London.

* *See* Appendix A.

A generation or so later in date than the Lindisfarne Gospels another Anglo-Saxon gloss was made, which was written by an Irish scribe, MacRegol. This manuscript has come down to us, under the name of its donor, as the "Rushworth" Gospels, and is now preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. Two notes have been appended to the parchment which inform us of its authorship. "Farmen the presbyter," we read, "this book thus glossed." And again, "Let him that makes use of me pray for Owun, who glossed this for Farmen, priest at Harewood."

To the tenth and eleventh centuries belong also several closely-related versions of the Gospels, one of which was much in use in Wessex. There is a copy of it in the British Museum, and it is of particular interest as being *an independent version with no accompanying Latin original.* They may all very possibly be variants of some original which has not been identified, but neither their authorship nor their precise date has, so far, been determined.

At the close of the tenth century, or early in the eleventh, Abbot Ælfric, the grammarian, from whose canons we have already quoted, made an Anglo-Saxon version of the Pentateuch, and also of Joshua, Judges, Esther, Job, part of the Book of Kings, and the Books of Judith and Maccabees. In translating the history of the Maccabean rising, Ælfric says he was impelled by a hope of thus kindling among his countrymen a patriotic war-spirit against the Danes. He tells us, moreover, that he was able to make some use of earlier versions, but none such have up to the present time been re-

covered. It must be remembered, however, in explanation of the gaps in our biblical literature which are so much to be regretted, that the national records have sadly suffered from the barbarism of the Dane, as well as from the contempt of the Norman for all things Saxon, and from the purblind zeal of Protestant fanaticism at the time of the Reformation.

With Ælfric ends the story of those isolated and fitful efforts in the field of poetic paraphrase, gloss, and translation, of which evidence has come down to us from ante-Norman times. It is scarcely necessary to say that the literary form and character of our Bible has not been in any way affected by them, since Anglo-Saxon English is no more our English than the Latin Vulgate is Italian. They derive their importance not so much from what they are in themselves, as from the spirit of which they are indications.

It is probable enough that, for the most part, they were produced with the idea of interpreting those parts of the Bible which would most constantly be in use through the Church services. But the Latin Bible still remained the official Bible of the Church, however active the zeal of independent scholars in the sphere of paraphrase or of translation. As being the work of monks or of bishops, such versions would naturally call for no challenge on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities. But the mere fact that these efforts were made at all must be hailed, whatever may have been their use and purpose, as a feature of the times which was full of promise for the future. They bear witness to us of the high esteem in which the Scriptures were held

by the native clergy of the Anglo-Saxon Church, and by the lay friends, too, with whom they may have shared them. And they serve to stud the somewhat gloomy centuries of the Middle Ages in England with literary signposts, beckoning us onward along the track of the vernacular towards the promised land of a complete translation.

Not, however, until the developments necessary for the accomplishment of so great an achievement had matured, could a complete rendering of the Latin Vulgate be made. And when, in the fulness of time, the Wycliffe Bible at length appeared, it appeared not merely as a book, but as an event of nothing less than national significance. For we see reflected in that earliest of our versions the wonderful continuity and persistence which mark not merely the English language, but the English character—a character and a language which neither the harrowing of the Dane, nor the arrogance of the Norman, nor the monasticism of the Italian, has ever been able permanently to suppress, and in whose invincible buoyancy is to be found the main secret of English history. What Horace sang long ago of Rome may well be applied to England:—

> "Duris ut ilex tonsa bipennibus
> Nigræ feraci frondis in Algido,
> Per damna, per cœdes ab ipso,
> Ducit opes animumque ferro."
>
> Od. iv., 4.

> "So, 'mid the dense-leaved forests of Algidus,
> Mark we the holm-oak, lopped by the heartless axe,
> Turn loss to gain, havoc to healing,
> Quickened with life by the very iron."

We have now arrived, in our preliminary survey, within sight of the Norman Conquest, and the consequent dethronement of Anglo-Saxon, as a literary language, by Anglo-Norman. Banished from court and castle, from the statute-book and from the school, the native tongue found shelter for a while with the Anglo-Saxon monk, with the parish priest, with the villager, the minstrel, and the friar. It ceased to be a written tongue, and began rapidly therefore both to change in structure and to become restricted in vocabulary. Yet the succession of paraphrases and translations, even under these new circumstances, never wholly ceased.

Early in the thirteenth century a monk of the order of St Augustine—Ormin, or Orm, by name—produced a metrical version of the Gospels and of the Acts, which is known as the *Ormulum*, and which has fortunately been preserved to us in a manuscript of some 20,000 lines, now numbered among the treasures of the Oxford Bodleian Library. The plan of the work is to paraphrase the Gospel for the day, and to accompany it with a short exposition, composed in the allegorical manner which was then so universally the fashion. The vocabulary is purely Teutonic, but in cadence and in syntax Ormin has evidently been affected by Norman influences. He gives his own justification of his version—

"If any one wants to know" (we render his words in modern English) "why I have done this deed, I have done it so that all young Christian folk may depend upon the Gospel only, and may follow with all their might its holy teaching, in thought, and word, and deed."

In addition to a translation of the Bible into Norman-French, which was due to the University of Paris, and which was in use in Northern France about 1250 A.D., there are many metrical paraphrases and renderings of Scripture, such, for example, as the "*Cursor Mundi*," perhaps the best known of them all, the "*Salus animæ*," or "*Sowle-hele*," and the "*Story of Genesis and Exodus*," which circulated freely in parts of England during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but it is not necessary to detain the reader with them, nor would any mere string of unfamiliar names be of the faintest interest. Some of them were composed, it may be added, for the use not of the conquered Saxon but of his French-speaking conquerors.

It is important, however, to notice that down to the middle of the fourteenth century no literal translation in English prose of any complete book of Scripture had been produced, except in the case of the Psalter, which as speaking the universal language of the human soul has always been the most favourite part of the Bible for devotional use. Of the Psalter itself there are at least two such prose translations, the one made in the South of England, and the other in the North. The former has somewhat doubtfully been ascribed to William of Shoreham, a place near Sevenoaks in Kent. There remain to us some of Shoreham's poems, and their dialect is Kentish, whereas this Psalter is in the dialect of the West Midlands. The latter we owe to Richard Rolle, who wrote "*The Pricke of Conscience*," and is more usually known as "The Hermit of Hampole," a spot not far from Doncaster in Yorkshire. Their

approximate dates are 1320 A.D., and 1340 A.D., and the common original from which both translations are made is the Latin Vulgate. It will be observed that these Psalters bring us down to the age of Wycliffe, who was born in or about the year 1324 A.D. We may now, therefore, bring this chapter to an end by summing up the main points which have been engaging our attention.

We were led, then, in the first place, to inquire why it was that, side by side with the progress of our vernacular literature, the Latin Bible and the Latin Liturgy so long retained their place unchallenged. We saw that medieval England was quite unripe for a Bible in the mother tongue, and that while the illiterate majority were in no condition to feel the want of such a book, the educated minority would be averse to the initiation of so great a change.

In the next place it was pointed out that the open Bible was not really what the age required; that the tendency of the Church-ritual was to throw the written word into the background; that religion was presented mainly in a pictorial and ceremonial form, and that the moral teaching of the Scriptures lay hidden away under a strange amalgam of allegory and legend. Furthermore, we found that the work of a missionary church was primarily concerned with conduct and discipline, and not with either theology or literature. From these considerations it seemed necessarily to follow, that, if the contents of the Bible were to be in any measure brought home to the artisans and peasantry of Anglo-Saxon England, it must be by means of agencies other

than that of dumb parchments. Such agencies we observed to have been in fact at work in the preaching of the local priest; in the song of the wandering minstrel; in the educating influence of pictorial art; and, though at a later date, in the attractions of the religious drama.

We laid stress on the unbroken continuity of the Saxon element in our history, and on the conversion of England to Catholicism as having been no sudden revolution, but rather a slow grafting process extending over many generations. We saw that there was no instantaneous metamorphosis; no violent substitution of something foreign for something native; no great convulsion, in the throes of which the national identity was dissolved and lost. A momentous change no doubt there was; its effect, however, was not to Latinise England, but rather to impress on a given Teutonic texture an indelible Christian pattern. The woof of a nobler creed was woven, thread by thread, upon the warp of the national character.

And, lastly, in our brief survey of the fragmentary vernacular renderings of the more familiar portions of the Latin Bible and Liturgy, we saw that while they bore witness to that love of the Scriptures which seems to be ingrained in the English nature, they served at the same time to keep the native language alive and vigorous, and to make available for a large and growing class, to whom Latin was of course an unknown tongue, that modest minimum of creed and prayer, of psalm and gospel, without which the simplest religious needs could not suitably have been met.

THE BIBLE AND SCHOLASTICISM

"As such who live in London and like populous places, having but little ground for their foundations to build houses on, may be said to enlarge the breadth of their houses in height (I mean increasing their room in many storeys one above another); so the Schoolmen, lacking the latitude of general learning and languages, thought to enlarge their minds by mounting up: so improving their small bottom with towering speculations, some of things mystical that might not—more of things difficult that could not—most of things curious that need not—be known unto us."

(*Fuller.*)

Σκινδαλαμοφράστην ἀιπυτάτης σοφίης·

Splitter of the straws of the deepest philosophy.

(*Anth. Pal.* xi. 354.)

CHAPTER III

THE BIBLE AND SCHOLASTICISM

THE time has long gone by when the Schoolmen, as they are called, could be dismissed from consideration with nothing better than a yawn or a sneer.

It is true that between their modes of thought and expression and our own there lies an impassable gulf. Their folios are fossils. Their species is almost as extinct as the Megatherium or the Dodo. But nevertheless it has come to be recognised that we owe them much more than at first sight would have appeared probable. For these theologians by profession were, in truth, the intellectual torch-bearers of the Middle Ages. It is the mere fact of their thinking, rather than the intrinsic value of their thoughts, which gives them their historical importance. It was the schoolmen who preserved the lamp of mental activity from dying out, enabled reason once more to lift up its head, and assisted in preparing the way both for a religious and for a philosophical reformation.

We have spoken of them as professional theologians, for the fact that by far the larger period of their activity was predominantly theological is a common-

place of history. It might fairly, therefore, have been expected that when a succession of eminent men—men who in sheer logical power, in acuteness and subtlety, have never been surpassed—had for centuries devoted their energies to the study of the Latin Scriptures, they would have left behind them, in the field of their labour, a bequest of permanent value. Yet any such expectation would be doomed to disappointment. The conditions under which the Schoolmen thought and studied were incompatible with any likelihood of a practically profitable result. For, having regard to their system as a whole, it cannot be too clearly understood that to the Bible, in the sense in which the Reformers began to know it, Scholasticism was almost entirely a stranger. What these dialecticians looked for in their Vulgate was something so remote from that which men sought and found in the Bible of a later day, that to all intents and purposes we might be dealing with two totally distinct books. It may be well to explain this point somewhat more fully.

Broadly speaking, then, the modern view of the sacred Scriptures is that in them we have the historical record of a progressive moral revelation, a revelation of what God is, and of what he has done for men; and that this record, which has come down to us through the writings of Hebraistic and Hellenistic Jews, is to be interpreted in accordance with the recognised canons of literary and historical criticism.

But such a view may almost be said to be the growth of our own century. At any rate it is not to be discovered in the minds of these learned but uncultured

doctors. The historical and ethical side of the Bible is to them as though it did not exist. Moreover, it is not to grammar, but to tradition and to imagination that they look for their method of interpretation. With the letter-worship of a Jewish Rabbi they not unfrequently combine the extravagances of an allegorising Gnostic. For them, Revelation, so far from being made "at sundry times, and in divers manners," was made all at one time and all in the same manner. Treating the record on one uniform dead level of verbal inspiration, they search it up and down, not in order to trace out the spiritual education of the chosen race, and through that race of the Gentile world, but for a technical and abstract philosophy of the Godhead. They "rack the text and drag it along by the hair," that they may make it serve the purposes of an artificial and arbitrary theological system. It is no part of their business to teach men how to live, but only how to define. Theological definitions, however, are not very helpful for ordinary men and women, and a diet of them, if too long sustained, is apt to induce a condition of spiritual anæmia.

In sharp contrast with Scholasticism stands the Reformation. To the more spiritual among the Reformers the Bible was a principle of life, a book "with wings and feet." To the Schoolmen it was a repository of dead texts. To the one it was God speaking to man, to the other it was a chain of rigid doctrines. The Reformer appealed to it against the Church. The Schoolman appealed to it to defend the Church. To the one it was the source and mainspring of spiritual activity and of truth

under its highest manifestation. To the other it was only one out of many sources of petrified dogma, and a kind of logic-quarry out of which to hew material for the premises of a syllogism. The Reformation sought through it a purified faith. Scholasticism sought to utilise it in the production of exhaustive theological manuals like the "*Summa*" of Aquinas,* or the "*Sentences*" of Peter the Lombard. If anything were needed to convince us that the Bible will outlive its enemies, it might well be found in the fact that the reverence which it commands to-day has proved able to survive the tortures which its books received at the hands of the cloistered students of the Middle Ages.

With the scholastic metaphysics we are not here concerned. Our aim in the present chapter is a historical aim. It is to indicate the importance of this strange period of Scholasticism as a preparatory school in the education of the human mind. These indefatigable doctors had of course no direct influence on the history of the English Bible. It does not follow that they had no influence all in connection with it. As a matter of fact, they are an important link in a long chain, of which such mighty movements as the Renaissance and the Reformation are links as well. The work of translating and popularising the Scriptures was the result of many co-operating causes. And we should do medievalism an injustice

* The works of Thomas Aquinas, the "Angelic Doctor," make up no less than seventeen large folio volumes. The "*Summa*" alone fills a folio containing about 1500 pages of small print in double columns, and includes, *inter alia*, 358 articles on the nature of Angels.

were we to omit from among such causes the pioneering work of her Schoolmen in the emancipation of reason.

In the sixth century of our era the secular schools of the Empire were swept away by the torrent of barbarism. The Church, the one institution which was left standing, lost no time in endeavouring to replace them. She set up cathedral schools in which to train her priests, and conventual schools in which to train her monks. During the earlier centuries, the real "dark ages" of medievalism, there continued to reign over the mind of Western Europe an all but unbroken night. At length civilisation began to feel less insecure, and the intellectual sky to clear and brighten. Through the agency of the Crusades, and through the influence of commerce, the culture of the East came to be revealed to the ignorance of the West. A desire arose to enlarge the scope of education, and to revise its method. Schools sprang up in Italy, France, and England, and served Christendom as local centres of instruction.

By slow degrees the cathedral schools developed into the medieval universities. Notwithstanding their invasion by the friars, these places of learning continued from the first to be more intimately allied with the seculars and the Kings than with the regulars and the Pope. A medieval university, it should be clearly understood, was not a collection of colleges.* It was the

* The term "*universitas*," in medieval Latin, means an aggregate not of buildings but of persons; whether of teachers, or of scholars, or of both. Probably the nearest equivalent to our "University" would be the expression "*Studium generale*."

outward and visible form in which the Middle Ages embodied their ideal of knowledge. We may describe it broadly as a guild of teachers. The name and fame of the most renowned among these teachers attracted students from all parts of Europe, birds of passage who migrated freely from one university to another, wherever some favourite professor might chance at the time to be delivering his lectures. Such, in their original character, were the universities of Paris and of Oxford, known respectively as the first and the second "schools of the Church."

These guilds of widely scattered lecturers were spoken of collectively as "The Schoolmen," or "Scholastics." Through them it was that the type of education underwent a change. It had been literary. It became philosophical; a strange mixture of Greek logic with the Christian Scriptures. Its professors comprised representatives of all the leading nations. Abelard was from France, Aquinas from Italy, Albert the Great from Germany, Ockham from England.

If the question is asked why the teaching of the Schoolmen was so much restricted to theology, and why it forced theology into a dialectical mould, the answer is, that in the first place it was in the field of theology alone that sufficient material was to be found, and secondly, that the Western mind had recently been thrown into a ferment of excitement by the new wine of the Aristotelian logic. Inductive Science was in its cradle. History was not yet born. Literature and Moral Philosophy were dead and forgotten. Arithmetic and Astronomy found themselves chiefly occupied

with the calendar of the Church just as Music was occupied with her plain song.

The influence of the great Greek philosopher, "the master," as Dante calls him, "of those that know," had been growing, at the expense of Plato, since almost the beginning of the Middle Ages. It originated in the survival of one small fragment of his various treatises on Logic. This waif and stray was an introduction, by a commentator called Porphyry, to the first of the six disquisitions which make up Aristotle's "*Organon*," or "instrument" of Dialectic. The disquisition in question was known as "*The Categories*," or, in other words, the various aspects under which we may regard anything about which we may be thinking. This brief treatise (together with a further one which deals with language as the interpreter of thought, and is known as "*The Interpretation*"), was studied, in a Latin translation, by churchmen and friars in order to train their faculties to argue logically on behalf of their religion. To this slender outfit a vast addition was made during the twelfth century by the famous commentaries of Averroes. A great influx of Aristotelian lore gradually found its way from the Arabs of Cordova through the Jews of Spain into the Christian schools, and Aristotle thus became the schoolmaster of the Schoolmen.

In this philosopher's "*Organon*,"—translated out of the original into Arabic, and out of Arabic into Latin—and in their own Latin Vulgate, the medieval doctors conceived that they had two Bibles of equal inspiration. If the Scriptures were a religious revelation, so was the

Logic of Aristotle a logical revelation. What was wanted was to co-relate and to exhibit the truths of the one under the logical forms of the other. To an extraordinary degree the Schoolmen became the slaves of the logic of which they prided themselves on being masters. The world of medievalism was almost wholly occupied with endless arguments about words, and terms, and propositions. The scientific observation of nature was reserved for a later world. This zeal of Oxford students for logical study is well described in Chaucer's Prologue—

> "A clerk there was of Oxenford also
> That unto logic hadde longe i-go:
> For he hadde gotten him no benefice,
> Ne was so worldly for to have office.
> For him was lever have at his beddes hed
> Twenty bookés, clad in black or red,
> Of Aristotle and his philosophie,
> Than robes riche, or fidele, or sautrie."

There resulted a period in the mental training of mankind to which no historical parallel can be found. The ceaseless and irrepressible activity of the human spirit, whose deepest problems, however they may change their form, remain in substance much the same from age to age, was forced to exercise itself within the confines of a theological cage, and to find utterance through the all-powerful ecclesiastical terminology of the time. It gave birth to what may be described as a kind of casuistry of the intellect. For just as with the Casuists the broad principle of duty disappears in a tangle of more or less sophistical rules for evading it, so with the Schoolmen the broad principles of religion and

reason are lost in an infinite series of disputations for which nothing is too sacred and nothing too minute. Thought made no pretence to any independence, or to any originality. It did not seek truth, but assumed it as something given already from without. Truth, for these subtle disputants, was simply what the Church had defined to be such. Given this body of traditional truths, the aim was to make clear and logically self-consistent what was "*ex hypothesi*" beyond question, to utilise the store for daily needs, and to adapt the dogmatic deliverances of the past to the present. A borrowed subject-matter was to be worked up by the assistance of a borrowed method. The matter was Dogma, brought together indifferently from the Latin Fathers, from lifeless biblical texts, from papal decretals, from conciliar canons. The method was the method of Aristotle's syllogistic logic, with its native formulæ stiffened out of all their original elasticity and flexibility by transplantation into a wholly alien soil.

Under the guise of defending the authority of faith, the Schoolmen unconsciously brought about the gradual emancipation of reason, and the historical position which they thus occupy is that of pioneers in a movement which may be broadly described as issuing on its intellectual side in the Renaissance, and on its religious side in the Reformation.

Theirs is a system of ecclesiastical education, which, bridging over the centuries that intervene between the decay and the revival of letters, may, with equal propriety, be described either as a theological philosophy, or as a philosophised theology. It belongs in part to

reason, and in part to faith; to the secular world of sublunary interests it can hardly claim to belong at all. It begins, with Anselm, in the subordination of reason to faith. It goes on, in Aquinas, to a harmonious understanding between the two. It ends, with the new Nominalists, like Ockham, and Marsiglio of Padua, in the temporary estrangement of the one from the other.

As has been said above, Scholasticism marks a period which is unique in history. For it is neither an age of intuition and of creative imagination, such as that to which we are introduced in Homer, nor is it an age of criticism and reflection, such as we find mirrored in the Platonic dialogues. We cannot call it a philosophy, for it makes no attempt to dig down to the foundations of intellectual life, but tacitly assumes beforehand the authoritative truth of the propositions which make up its premises. Yet, on the other hand, it is certainly not a religion. For by religion we must at the least mean something which has life and soul; something that has power to touch the emotions, to kindle the imagination, and to mould the will. Scholasticism can only be described as a cold, dead system of barren argumentation, from which every trace of sensibility, and tenderness, and aspiration, has been crushed out by the relentless despotism of logical forms. We do not find it characterised by any alertness of scientific curiosity, while to the old classical sense of the worth and dignity of human things it is quite a stranger. As we pass within its portals, this present life appears as cast into deep shadow by the fierce light of its

Final Cause, the life to come. The world of the living attracts but an inferior and subordinate interest. It is but the insignificant ante-room to the greater world of the dead.

To sum up the substance of the matter in a few sentences, we may picture to ourselves, as forming the material with which Scholasticism was busy, a tangled mass of Dogma, or, in other words, of authoritative utterances originally adapted to meet this or that question or difficulty, when and where it chanced to arise. The all-absorbing problem of the Schoolmen is so to manipulate, to digest, and to codify these disjointed deliverances as to exhibit the inherent reasonableness of the body of doctrine held traditionally by the Church.

Anselm's saying, "*Credo ut intelligam*," "I believe in order that I may understand," may be taken as the representative motto of this logic-ridden theology. Reason, under this conception of its functions, is neither something independent of faith, nor is it recognised as a formative element of the nature which makes man human. It is merely the handmaid of faith, working the logical machinery in the interests of its employer. At the same time it is not to be denied that, in their treatment of the objects of faith as fit and proper objects for scientific inquiry;—in their hypothesis, in other words, that religion is at bottom rational in its nature,—the Schoolmen were destined to prove powerful stimulators of the spirit of investigation and criticism.

But the immediate and direct result of their labours

was that Christian doctrine and Greek philosophy were both equally degraded. The deformation of theology was thus made the antecedent condition of its reformation. In the early days of the faith religion was rather a life of spiritual intuition than a carefully articulated creed. The truth of the doctrine had been safeguarded by the inner witness of the Christian consciousness. For, where "love is an unerring light, and joy its own security," a faithful life rises in its moral enthusiasm far above all logical difficulties. But this safeguard had now long been lost. The cold intellectual processes of Scholasticism lay on the human spirit like a frost. Its system resembled a passionless brain without a heart. It manipulated the dead letter of authority with such remorseless ingenuity, with such an entire absence of any misgiving, any reverence or veneration, that, in their recoil from it, the more sensitive minds were driven into Mysticism, there perchance to discover, through love, the secrets which seemed to be sealed to knowledge.

And, if there were some minds which were impelled towards Mysticism, there were others which moved rapidly in the direction of Scepticism. The inherited beliefs of the Church became one by one so honeycombed by the subtle working of the speculative recklessness to which they had been subjected by the Nominalists, that the old theological building was rendered all but hopelessly uninhabitable. Such was the result, though it was very far from having been the aim, of the Scholastic Philosophy. The logical difficulties which it raised continued to live on long

after their suggested dialectical solutions had been forgotten, and the working alliance of religion and logic thus brought about its own dissolution. Unable any longer to reconcile reason and dogma, men fell back upon the fatal principle of the "two truths," namely, that what was true dogmatically might at the same time not be true rationally. Speculative reason, desiring to assert its independence of authority, broke away from theology, and took refuge in modern philosophy and modern science. Faith, ill at ease with the form on which religion was presented to it, sought a less asphyxiating atmosphere in the Reformation. With the revival of Nominalism in William of Ockham, Scholasticism however took a new departure. Stepping out of the narrow sphere of the study of "Universals," it began to interest itself in the ecclesiastical and political problems of the work-a-day world, and to breathe an ampler air. But meanwhile the Schoolmen had not laboured in vain. Almost in spite of themselves they had achieved an educational work which has too often been left unappreciated. Although their labours, at the time, succeeded only in unspiritualising the Church without spiritualising the world, yet at least they awakened the world out of its long sleep, and stimulated the new desire for scientific inquiry and knowledge. If they failed to enlarge the boundaries of reason they gave a keener edge to its instruments. It was thus that from Scholasticism, as from a fountain-head, sprang both the Protestantism of religion and the Protestantism of thought, and we may apply to its historical significance the description which Horace

has left us of his own relation to the art of poetical composition :—

> "Fungar vice cotis, acutum
> Reddere quæ ferrum valet, exsors ipsa secandi."
> *Ars Poetica*, 304-5.

> "Mine is the whetstone's lot, I sharpen, but
> There my part ends, 'tis not for me to cut."

JOHN WYCLIFFE

"Master John Wycliffe was considered by many to be the most holy of all the men in his age. He was of emaciated frame, spare, and well-nigh destitute of strength. He was absolutely blameless in his conduct. Wherefore very many of the chief men of this kingdom who frequently held counsel with him, were devotedly attached to him, and kept a record of what he said, and guided themselves after his manner of life."

(*W. Thorpe*, 1410 A.D., *quoted by Bale.*)

"In philosophy, Wycliffe came to be reckoned inferior to none of his time, and incomparable in the performance of School exercises, a man of profound wit, and very strong in disputations, and who was by the common sort of divines esteemed little less than a god."

(*Knighton.*)

"The devil's instrument, Church's enemy, people's confusion, heretic's idol, hypocrite's mirror, schism's broacher, hatred's sower, lies' forger, flatteries' sink, who, stricken by the horrible judgment of God, breathed forth his soul to the dark mansion of the black devil."

(*Epitaph, written at St Alban's.*)

"This Master John Wycliffe translated into the Anglic, not Angelic tongue, the Gospel. Whence it is made vulgar by him, and more open to the reading of lay men and women, than it usually is to the knowledge of lettered and intelligent clergy, and thus the pearl is cast abroad and trodden under feet of swine. The jewel of the Church is turned into the common sport of the people."

(*Knighton.*)

CHAPTER IV

JOHN WYCLIFFE AND THE BIBLES OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

THE preliminary survey to which the preceding chapters have been devoted has now brought us within sight of a border period of great interest and importance in the religious history of England. It is a period in which the best known actor is one of the most illustrious of the sons of Oxford, a man whose life covers the declining years of the old scholastic methods and the opening out of a new intellectual movement, and who has accordingly been appropriately described as "the last of the Schoolmen and the first of the Reformers," John Wycliffe.

Later on in this chapter it is proposed to give some account of the two versions of that earliest English Bible which for some five hundred years has been linked with Wycliffe's name. It will be sufficient at present to note that the Bible in question is a translation of a translation, namely of the Latin Vulgate, and that the dialect in which it is written and the mode of spelling which it employs, are so far removed from the literary language and spelling

of the Bible now in use as to place it in a category of its own, and, from the point of view of an English reader, to render our interest in it chiefly of an archaic and philological character.

On the other hand, to make a brief selection, the following among its phrases remain embedded in our Authorised Version, and appear also, with but one exception, in the Revised Version. Such renderings as "compass sea and land," "first fruits," "strait gate," "make whole," "damsel," "peradventure," "son of perdition," "savourest not the things of God," "enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," are as familiar to us as anything in our Bible.

But though much of the language of his translation had become obsolete even before the Reformation, Wycliffe himself is so prominent a figure in the national history that we need offer no excuse for endeavouring to recall the likeness of a man, who, whether we look to the uniqueness of his position and work, to his many-sided life and character, or to the range and versatility of his mind, must always rank among the most striking personalities in the England of the fourteenth century.

The details of his life may be left to his biographers. It will be enough for the reader of these pages if he can trace the lines along which the schoolman developed into the translator, and can understand why and how it was that, although Wycliffe lived and died a beneficed clergyman, he should yet have come to be regarded by the hierarchy with such relentless animosity that his very bones were exhumed

and burnt, and his ashes scattered to the four winds of heaven.

Like the fourteenth century itself, Wycliffe stands half in and half out of the Middle Ages. He represents a time of transition from the old order to the new. In his ideas themselves he is for the most part in advance of his age, but in the way in which he presents and clothes, and defends them, he belongs unmistakably to Medievalism. And the same double character is illustrated by his mastery of English as well as of Latin, and by the ease and readiness with which, at the end of his career, he passes from the academic disputant into the popular pamphleteer.

As long as he was addressing the learned world as a university teacher he addressed it in its own ecclesiastical Latin. No sooner, however, had he given up all hope of the reformation of the Church from within; no sooner had he turned from Oxford and London to make his memorable appeal to the nation at large by his pamphlets and tracts, by his roving preachers, and by the newly translated Bible with which he had supplied them, than we find him subordinating his academic Latin to the vernacular, and astonishing us by his transformation into a master-builder, in his own dialect and style, of English prose.

And if Wycliffe represents a new movement in our literature, so too does he represent a new departure in our religious history. For the rise of Lollardy, in so far as it was a religious movement, marks the earliest break in the dogmatic continuity of Latin Christianity in England. Ever since the coming of the Roman

and Irish missionaries the orthodoxy of the English Church had been preserved unblemished; but, if Wycliffe is to be judged by the standard of medieval faith, and not by his own standard of the New Testament and of the early Church, it can hardly be disputed that our first reformer was also our first conspicuous heretic.

In judging of Wycliffe's influence among his contemporaries it is of the first importance to bear in mind the following consideration. It was his name and fame as a Schoolman that gave such importance to his religious opinions. But for the long and close alliance between the schools and the Church, and the high esteem in which the scholastic learning of the day was held, coupled as this was with his own unrivalled position among the "Doctors" of Oxford, he could never have become such a power as a spiritual teacher. Take away from him his university prestige, and he would soon have been sneered down into insignificance as a mere "Biblicist," and crushed under the dead weight of ecclesiastical obscurantism.

"Scholasticism," writes Mr Rashdall,* "amid all differences between conflicting schools, had been unimpeachably loyal to the Church system and the theological premises on which it was based. The importance of the Wycliffite movement consisted in this, that, now for the first time, the Established Church principles were assailed, not by some obscure fanatic, not by some mere revivalist, but by a great scholastic doctor in the 'second school of the Church.'"†

Not only, however, was it on the side of Scholasti-

* *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, II., ii., 539.
† Viz., Oxford.

cism, but on every side, that the venerable fabric of Medievalism was being undermined. One important effect of the Crusades had been to bring the barbarism of the West into close contact with the science and culture of the East, and all through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the intellectual movement which had thence received its impetus had been constantly expanding. It resulted that an eager desire for knowledge was attracting students in tens of thousands to those newly-founded and central Universities, which, as the homes of education, were taking the place of the rival monasteries and cathedrals with their scattered and antiquated local schools.

This widespread aspiration towards a fuller and freer life was slowly sapping the foundations of privilege. New professions were beginning to open up in medicine, law, and science. Chivalry and feudalism were already in their decline. The Empire had shrunk into a mere shadow of its former splendour. Across the path of the Papacy were planted the nationalities of France and England, flushed with a newborn sense of political individuality and independence.

And if the intellect of the Western world had at last awakened out of sleep, so too had its conscience. The lay mind was everywhere in moral revolt, not yet indeed against the doctrinal creed of the Church, but against her worldliness and immorality, her pretentiousness, her greed of wealth, and her arrogance. And while this omnipotent Church was daily growing richer and more indolent, the treasuries of

Europe, whether national or papal, continued subject to a severe and constant strain. To meet the pressure of financial exigencies caused by the prodigality and pageantry of courts and kings; by the burdens of incessant war; by the ravages of plague, and pestilence, and famine, all classes of the community were being impartially plundered. A spirit of restlessness and discontent was abroad, and rival claimants were competing far and wide for intellectual and social allegiance: Latin Christianity and Teutonic; tradition and scripture; canonists and legists; realists and nominalists; authority and conscience; capital and labour.

But, for our present purpose, it is less with the general than with the ecclesiastical aspect of the century that we have to do. As the spiritual umpire and moderator among the kingdoms of the West, the medieval Papacy had held a position of unequalled moral dignity and grandeur. She had rendered invaluable service, during the political minority of Europe, as the guardian and protector of the weak against the strong, and of the claims of equal justice against the lawlessness of feudalism. She had given unity to the warring elements of Teutonism, and had evolved order out of chaos. She had represented the principle of right against might, and of freedom against oppression. Lofty in conception and pure in purpose, men saw in her an institution which might well impress itself on their imagination as something whose origin was from heaven.

It became quite another matter, however, when the Popes stepped down into the political arena, and fought

there for mere temporal sovereignty. After a protracted and financially exhausting struggle, the Papacy had proved eventually successful in its duel with the Empire, and the great house of the Hohenstaufen was humbled at last to the dust. But the Empire and the Papacy had for many centuries been most intimately associated in the medieval mind. In a very real sense they were twin powers, and the overthrow of the one shook the prestige of the other to its foundations. So long as the Empire remained a reality the idea of secular centralisation reigned supreme. The fall of the Hohenstaufen opened the way for the new idea of nationality. With material success, too, there had come a decline in moral authority, and behind the awful mask of St Peter men had learnt to detect the features of the ordinary political adventurer.

Wycliffe's century, it will be remembered, opens with the momentous quarrel between Boniface VIII., with whom ecclesiastical arrogance seems to be touching its meridian, and Philip IV. of France. And from this quarrel, with its sequels of the "Babylonian Captivity" at Avignon, and the great Schism of 1378, may be dated the downfall of the Papacy as the moral tribunal of Christendom and the spiritual Delphi of the Middle Ages. The claim to decide issues of right and wrong by a divinely delegated authority could not long continue to be successfully maintained by Popes whom men saw abdicating the august independence of the Apostolic See and stooping to enrich themselves by a shameless traffic in holy things. While holding their court in the eternal city, the Popes had been clothed

in the universality which was inseparable from the very idea of Rome. But at Avignon this attribute of universality necessarily vanished away. An Avignese Pope was practically a French Pope, and the tacit renunciation by the Papacy of its autonomy meant nothing less than its spiritual degradation. It was St Peter who still spoke, but his words were the words of the King of France.

To say nothing of the flagrant iniquities of the palace at Avignon, it was with a feeling akin to disgust that men saw the representatives of Hildebrand and of Innocent deserting the religious capital of Christendom and degrading themselves into the position of political puppets. Nor is the historical drama of the time wanting in an element of tragedy. For nothing surely could be more tragic than the catastrophe through which the imposing splendour and pomp of the Papal Jubilee of A.D. 1300, under Boniface VIII., came to be succeeded within three short years by the ignominy of that Pontiff's sudden arrest and downfall. Rarely, indeed, has the irony of history found a more striking illustration than in those two companion pictures of the suppliant Emperor at Canossa, and of the captive Pope at Anagni.

In the meantime, however, the Papacy was abating nothing of the audaciousness of her claims. The abandonment of the sacred shrines of St Peter and St Paul had involved a most serious shrinkage of revenue, but the expenditure of a corrupt and profligate court still went on unchecked, and was in fact rather increased than curtailed.

It had become necessary, therefore, in order to meet the growing indebtedness of Avignon, that her widespread army of tax-collecting harpies should be stimulated into abnormal activity. Small wonder that the Papacy, as distinct from the Church of which it was the head, should have been universally detested as the ecclesiastical vampire of the West, and not least so in our own island, which for generations had been, and which still remained, the favourite among the milch-cows of Rome.

Hence it is that the administrative aggressions, extortions, and encroachments, which by a natural sequence resulted from the financial embarrassment of the Avignese Popes, are seen, when taken in conjunction with the moral degradation by which they were accompanied, to form a dramatic background against which the ever-increasing hostility of Rome's great English opponent is thrown into historical relief. And hence, too, it is that the readiest key to Wycliffe's career is to be found in the conviction,—a conviction which grew deeper as life went on,—that the Papal claims were incompatible with what he felt to be the moral truth of things, incompatible with his conscience, with his instinct of patriotism, and finally, with the paramount authority of the inspired Book which was his spiritual Great Charter.

The traditional accounts of Wycliffe agree in representing him as somewhat frail in appearance and constitutionally of indifferent health. He would seem also to have been wanting in that quality of passionate enthusiasm which goes to make the great religious leader.

The secret springs of the influence which he exercised over his fellows lay, as they lay with Newman, in the purity, the unworldliness, and the spirituality of his character; in a certain personal magnetism and power of mentally impressing those with whom he was thrown; in his intensity of will and purpose; in the sincerity and earnestness that was manifest in all that he said and did; in his moral courage; and last, not least, in the high repute in which he stood as the ablest living representative in England of the learning and logical acuteness of the schools.

Wycliffe's career divides itself with sufficient distinctness into three more or less inter-dependent stages.

The first of these stages comprises his thirty years or so of training and development as a schoolman at Oxford (1336-1366).

The second stage (1366-1378) embraces the political period of his life, and his activity both in publicly opposing the temporal claims of the Papacy, and in declaiming as well against the exemption of ecclesiastical persons from lay control as against the principle of an endowed Church.

The third and last stage of his life (1378-1384) dates from the crisis known as the Papal Schism; and it is under the influence of the shock which he received from the spectacle of the sudden dislocation of Christendom that we shall find Wycliffe declaring war against Rome and her representatives in England, crossing the ecclesiastical Rubicon, and standing forward, isolated and alone, as an open disbeliever in the central principles of the medieval system of religion.

Born of a good Yorkshire stock, John Wycliffe entered Oxford soon after the outbreak of the so-called "Hundred Years War" with France. Of the details of his university life little is known, but he may probably have been a scholar of Balliol. The fact that he belonged to the Northern "nation" among the university students indicates that even from the very first his sympathies must have been anti-Papal. In due course his exceptional talents and the nobility of his moral character received their natural reward. Whether he was ever a Fellow of Merton is not certain, but in 1361 he is known to have been Master of Balliol.

After a brief tenure he exchanged the Mastership for the College living of Fillingham, a parish distant some ten miles or so from Lincoln, and henceforward his time was somewhat unequally divided between the duties of his benefice and the intellectual attractions of Oxford.

The lustre of the University of Paris, "the first school of the Church," had of late been somewhat obscured, partly owing to the long continuance of war, and partly to the overshadowing influence of the Papal Court at Avignon. Thus the Oxford of Wycliffe's prime had come to occupy the most conspicuous position in the whole of Europe as a centre of liberal and independent thought. Even in spite of the friars and the plague it was crowded with students, fermenting with intellectual activity, and convulsed with the ceaseless quarrels of seculars and regulars.

Though we are not entitled to claim for him a place in the first rank either of metaphysical or of literary

genius, Wycliffe was undoubtedly the foremost figure in his university, as well as the master-spirit in the ethical and religious revivalism of his age. It is easier to under-estimate than to exaggerate the influence which he exercised upon his contemporaries. Surrounded as we are to-day with books, journals, and periodicals without number, it requires no inconsiderable effort to realise the force and power which in bygone years, when no printing-press had been invented, when books were few and readers fewer still, belonged to the living voice of eloquence and learning. And it was just such a living voice which was embodied in Wycliffe. It was notorious that, whether in the lecture-hall or in the pulpit, no other Schoolman could hope to rival him, while his wonderful skill of intellectual fence must have made him a formidable foe even among the logical swordsmen of the time.

Yet, strange as it may appear, it was not either to logic or to philosophy that Wycliffe was eventually to owe the distinguishing title by which he has come down to posterity. To every eminent doctor it was the custom of the day to attach some descriptive blazon or surname. Duns Scotus (to take an example from the philological ancestor of the noble company of "dunces") was called the "subtle"; Bradwardine the "profound"; Ockham the "invincible." In the case of Wycliffe his admirers must have been hard put to it, when in contact with a mind so richly gifted, to point to any one notably predominant trait.

In a society where the theologians of the day were all but unanimous in awarding precedence to the

doctrines of famous Schoolmen basing themselves on the Fathers,—whether to the reasoned opinions, (or so-called *Sentences*), of Peter the Lombard, or to the *Summa* of Aquinas,—it was Wycliffe's exceptional and strenuous vindication of the Scriptures, as the one paramount rule of human life and conduct, which seems to have won for him his surname of the "evangelical" doctor. That he should bring to his interpretation of the Vulgate trains of thought that were scholastic and feudal in their colouring was only natural. The remarkable fact was, that, in days when Bible-reading was not the common practice, the leading English thinker of his age should have deemed no pains too great to make himself intimately familiar with the moral teaching of a book which the large majority of his fellow theologians were disposed to value chiefly as a treasure-house of dead dogma.

Accordingly it was by the standard of the Bible and of the early Fathers that Wycliffe persistently desired that his orthodoxy or his unorthodoxy might be tried. And not his own alone, but the orthodoxy even of the supreme Pontiff himself, and of all the rulers of the Church. The attitude therefore which he held towards the only organised religious body which was then in existence, was at first neither that of a sectarian nor of a schismatic, but that of a moral reformer. His quarrel, to put the same thing in other words, was not with the foundations of the ecclesiastical edifice of Medievalism, but only with a superstructure which was out of keeping with the original design, and which was, moreover, of comparatively recent date. Yet, had his

supporters in England been less powerful, or had Rome been more herself, it is hardly possible that he would have been permitted to die, as he had all along lived, in unbroken communion with a Church which it was his first aim to purify and to spiritualise.

For it is evident from his writings that between Wycliffe and the mediatorial system of medieval Christianity no middle term of reconciliation can really be found. Deep down at the root of his hostility to the formalism and materialism that he saw everywhere reflected in the religious ordinances of his age, we find his overmastering conviction of the individual and personal responsibility of man to God. Religion was for Wycliffe something the credentials of which were to be sought in the very constitution of that spiritual principle whose life develops only from within; something which refused to be swallowed up by any secularising influences; something which belonged essentially to the heart and conscience, and concerned itself only in a subordinate degree with ancillary forms and symbols.

It may be remarked that the first of the three stages in Wycliffe's life coincides in a general way with that flood-tide of patriotic elation which we find sweeping through the central years of the long reign of Edward III. And probably we shall not be far from the truth if we picture him, at the close of this first stage, as on the one hand a schoolman renowned for his eccentricities no less than for his mastery of logic; and on the other hand as a reformer of devout moral earnestness, with a cast of mind which, while finding but comparatively little value in mere externals, was in the best sense deeply

religious. Pure in life and lofty in character, a great university teacher and preacher, an Augustinian in his strong sense of the inherent frailty and sinfulness of human nature, and of the irresistible power of divine grace, Wycliffe held views on the current ecclesiastical problems of his day which were not likely to be popular. His temperament was intellectual rather than emotional; a temperament which radiated more of dry light than of genial warmth. He was of grave and ascetic habit; a born fighter, and a man of war even from his youth; an eager champion of his country against the foreigner; of seculars against regulars; of the spiritual against the worldly ideal; of a voluntary ministry against an endowed hierarchy; of the Christianity of the ante-Papal Church against the Christianity of the later Middle Ages; of the supremacy of Scripture over tradition, and of personal worth and merit over the claims of any merely official dignity. Vigorous in will, unflinching in courage, tenacious in purpose, he would nevertheless appear to have been lacking in constructive genius, and lacking also in that magic power of love and sympathy which had inspired Aidan and the Celtic missionaries, and which characterises great leaders like St Francis, St Bernard, and Savonarola. Finally, Wycliffe was an iconoclastic reformer with keenly democratic instincts, whose inmost soul was stirred to its depth by the spectacle of the social wretchedness which was rife in the England of his day owing to the joint operation of pestilence and war. Nor in this respect did he stand alone. Already the miseries of the down-trodden peasantry had found a

voice in John Ball, the mad preacher of Kent; and still more in the famous poem of Langland, the Bunyan of the fourteenth century, a poem in which Caedmon himself seemed to have come back to life, and which was rapidly becoming the best known book in England, "*The Vision Concerning Piers the Ploughman.*"*

The second, or political, stage in Wycliffe's career extends from 1366 to 1378. It is this period which embraces the years of his patronage by John of Gaunt, whose keen eye saw in the upright and popular Doctor of theology an invaluable ally in the political attack, which, under the Duke's powerful leadership, was being developed against Church endowments whether in lands or in money, as giving the holders of them too dangerous a predominance. Speaking generally, this second stage is commensurate with the gloomy period of national humiliation and depression which darkened the close of the long reign of Edward III., and which made men forget the glories of Crécy and Poictiers. To these years, too, belongs the publication of Wycliffe's Latin treatises on his famous theory of *Dominion.*† In them he explains, among other matters, his views on the nature of property; on the relation of the spiritual and temporal powers; and on the invalidity of the feudal claims of the Papacy over England; subjects which were exercising the minds of the foremost thinkers of his day, and to which he had already devoted a large part of his university lectures.

In the year 1366, soon after he had been honoured

* Green's *Hist. of the English People* (1877), vol. i., pp. 439-43.
† *See* Appendix B.

by the marked compliment of an appointment as King's chaplain in London, where he was soon to become famous as a preacher, he is said * to have been selected to defend by his pen the decision at which Parliament had unanimously arrived against Pope Urban's claim to exercise temporal authority in England. Great indignation had been aroused by the Pope's inopportune demand for the unpaid arrears of the tribute originally imposed, as a symbol of bondage, on the feebleness of King John. And, from the fact that he was invited on so important an occasion to champion the rising spirit of national independence, it is evident that the Oxford divine must have become known as a strong anti-Roman even beyond and outside his own academic circle. For a mere theologian, however prominent, would scarcely have been singled out to give his support to the State at such a juncture, unless upon the subject referred to him he could speak with an authority which commanded general respect.

Nor need we feel any surprise that Wycliffe's dialectical fame should thus have spread abroad. Oxford was the intellectual capital of England, and in and out of her gates there kept flowing a ceaseless stream of students from every part, who in their migrations to other universities would be constantly conveying the sayings of her lecture-rooms, or the teachings of her pulpits, to the various continental centres.

In the year 1374 Wycliffe was appointed by the Crown

* It is uncertain whether this event is to be referred to the year 1366 or to the year 1374, when Urban's demand was renewed.

to act as one of the Royal Commissioners at the ill-timed and abortive Conference which met at Bruges. At that Conference the English Commissioners had to discuss with the representatives of the Pope the delicate subject of his incessant interference with ecclesiastical patronage in England. It was hardly likely that any Conference would achieve the settlement of a question, which, in spite of the statute law, was deliberately kept open by the connivance of Popes and Kings for their mutual convenience and advantage. In 1377 the "Babylonian Captivity" came to an end, and the Papal court returned from Avignon to Rome. The change was one of far more than sentimental importance, inasmuch as, by setting the Papacy free from the direct control of France, it went some way towards abating the strong political hostility which had been excited and maintained in England by the long alliance of the Roman curia with the hereditary enemy of the nation. In the same year there occurred that * historic scene in St Paul's which marked the opening of the Church's campaign against Wycliffe as the ally of her unprincipled despoiler, John of Gaunt, and further as the promulgator of doctrines tending to subvert the existing ecclesiastical order.

There are two points in regard to these years to which we must invite particular attention. The first is, that whatever hopes Wycliffe may at one time have legitimately cherished on the subject of Church-reform by the aid of the Crown and of Parliament, these were now shattered by an unforeseen combination of adverse influences. Among them may be mentioned the death

* Milman's *Annals of St Paul's Cathedral* (1868), p. 76.

of the Black Prince, who had been the idol of the people, and who was well disposed towards Wycliffe; the demise of the Crown; the growing unpopularity of the all-powerful John of Gaunt; the general darkening of the political sky; and lastly, the apprehension of social disturbance, a dread which after the third visitation of the Black Death in 1366 was deepening year by year. The prospect of a religious in addition to an agrarian revolution would naturally under such circumstances be even more than ordinarily unwelcome.

The second point is, that the fifty days which Wycliffe spent in conclave with the Pope's ambassadors at Bruges, must, as in the analogous case of Luther's visit to Rome, have afforded him a close insight into the inner working of the administrative machinery of Papal aggression, and must also have made it more evident than ever in high quarters, that, in the fearless author of the "*De Dominio*" the Papacy had to deal with a powerfully-supported and determined foe in a controversy which admitted of no compromise. For if Wycliffe was right, the days of ecclesiastical supremacy were numbered, and the fatal writing was already upon the wall.

In passing from Wycliffe the Oxford divine, to Wycliffe the ecclesiastical politician and reformer, there is one question which will most probably have already suggested itself. In what way, it may naturally have been asked, was the Scholasticism of Oxford connected in those days with politics? What had the inner and lesser world of the University got to do with the outer and greater world of Emperors, and Popes, and

Kings? What was there in common between the metaphysical controversies of Nominalists and Realists, and the quarrels of Edward III. and Urban V.? How could the training of an Oxford theologian serve to qualify him for the exceptional position of a guardian of the public conscience in such matters as the relations between England and Rome?

The reader may perhaps be assisted in the solution of such questions if he will remind himself, that, by the last half of the fourteenth century, Scholasticism had changed in character, and had taken a new departure. The leading minds of the university schools formed the intellectual link between the dying world of Medievalism and the new world which was struggling to be born. Great University thinkers, like Marsiglio of Padua and William of Ockham,* were no longer shut up in the subtleties of logic and theology. They had become political philosophers, and in that capacity had aroused general attention. In their published writings they treated fearlessly of issues in which lay involved the very existence of ecclesiastical and civil society as then constituted. It was as natural therefore that Wycliffe, the philosopher of the schools, should be consulted on a political issue by Edward III., as that Marsiglio and Ockham should have been consulted, half a century earlier, by the Emperor Lewis of Bavaria in his political fight with Pope John XXII.

The maxims and principles of these continental Publicists had become common property, and were doubtless familiar to such an eager student as Wycliffe.

* *Wycliffe and Movements for Reform*, R. L. Poole, 1889.

Indeed their very manuscripts would be readily accessible to him, whether in the libraries of Balliol and Merton, or in the unique collection which Richard de Bury, the most enthusiastic book collector of the Middle Ages, had just bequeathed to the college of Durham, a college the original site of which stood where Trinity stands to-day.

Now both Marsiglio and Ockham had argued with great strenuousness in support of the civil power against the temporal jurisdiction of the Papacy. They had further contended that the principle of sovereignty, in Church and State alike, must be held ultimately to repose on a popular and not upon either a monarchical or an oligarchical basis. The State, they held, meant the whole body of citizens. The Church, in like manner, meant the whole body of Christian people. And we must recollect that it is to this very Ockham that Wycliffe has confessed himself to have been largely indebted in forming his views upon ecclesiastical problems. On metaphysical questions the two doctors were fundamentally disagreed, for while Wycliffe was a moderate Realist, and inclined therefore to Platonism, Ockham was the great re-discoverer of Nominalism, and was in many respects an Aristotelian.

Their agreement, however, extended to the views which they held on the vexed subject of "evangelical poverty," a subject which had already given rise to much angry controversy, and this too within the Church itself, by bringing to the front the embarrassing problem of religious and moral ideals.

The political and religious world into which Wycliffe

had been born may be described as a world more prodigal of great questions than of their solutions. In the sphere of the religious life it reflected two strongly contrasted principles which had recently come into violent collision, the ascetic principle and the mundane. This collision had brought about a mutiny in the ranks of one out of the two great wings of the Papal army, namely, the Franciscan friars. At the Conference which met during the year 1322 at Perugia, the "spiritual" Franciscans had broken away from the main body, and during the fourteenth century the breach between them remained unrepaired. To the one side therefore belonged the mundane or political ideal which stood embodied in the hierarchical Church; the ideal of men like Hildebrand, Innocent, and Boniface VIII.; with a strict celibacy for its foundation, with its crown of pomp, and wealth, and splendour, having tithes for its taxes, and prelates for its nobles. On the other side, the side which attracted Wycliffe's sympathies, there was the religious and ascetic ideal of saintly philanthropists like St Bernard, St Francis of Assisi, and Peter Waldo; the "Imitation of Christ," the going about doing good, the glorification of poverty as the note of a genuine Church, and the consequent condemnation of great possessions in that they let and hindered true spirituality of life, as exemplified and inculcated in the Gospel history.

Pope John XXII. had found it expedient, in self-defence, to brand the doctrine of the "spirituals" as heretical, but, whether heretical or orthodox, it not unnaturally was welcome to reflective and pious minds as

a refreshing contrast to what was obtruding itself upon the world as the accepted ideal of Avignon. For just as the political aspirations of the Papacy had received at the opening of the century a deadly blow when King Philip burnt the famous Bull, "Ausculta Fili," in the streets of Paris, so, by the secession of the "Fraticelli" from their brother Franciscans, a corresponding blow was levelled at the spiritual claims of the Avignese Court to be regarded as the divinely-appointed ensample of Christian living.

Thus on two of the great questions of his day,—the question of the right relation of the temporal to the spiritual power, and the question of Church endowments,—Wycliffe held opinions which on their political side attached him to the continental and anti-Papal school of Ockham and Marsiglio, and on their religious side to the schismatic spiritual Franciscans, or "Fraticelli," of whom Ockham was one of the chief leaders. In theology proper Wycliffe resembled Luther in being a Predestinarian, and a devoted follower of St Augustine, the Father whose works were looked up to throughout the Middle Ages with a reverence resembling that which was paid to the *Institutions* of Calvin at the time of the Reformation. In this respect he adopted the principles of his famous predecessor at Oxford, Bradwardine, whose treatise against the prevalent Pelagianism of the period was for many years a much-used and valued text-book.

The year 1377 has been selected as marking the ulterior limit of the second stage in Wycliffe's career, because during the following year there occurred an

event which, both for the reformer himself and for the world at large, was to have the most momentous consequences. The Papal Schism of 1378 is the greatest religious crisis of the fourteenth century, and with it we enter upon the last of our three stages, and upon the final act in the drama of Wycliffe's life. Up to this point his outward and admitted antagonism to Rome, and to the national Church of his own country, had been directed, first against the increasing claims of the Popes and of the hierarchy to temporal jurisdiction and power in England; next against ecclesiastical endowments; and finally against the worldliness and moral decadence and lax discipline of the clergy.

But it was an essential feature in the idea of the Papacy that the Vicar of Christ in his sacred office was the representative of the indivisibility of truth. In the See of Rome the world had been taught to find the symbol and the guarantee of religious unity. Suddenly therefore to exhibit the seamless vesture of Latin Christianity as rent in twain, and the Papacy as the open battlefield of rival claimants each professing to be the true Pope, was to give religious faith a shock such as nowadays we are scarcely able to realise. Spiritual obedience, torn rudely from its old moorings, drifted away into a divided allegiance with no better bond of cohesion than the mere accident of country. In principle the Schism was a political struggle between Italy and France for the spoils of the Papacy, and while the rival Popes were denouncing each other as Anti-Christ, Christendom was plunged in blood and left denuded of spiritual leadership.

So tremendous a catastrophe could not leave a man of Wycliffe's temperament unaffected. It occurred, moreover, at a period of his life when a long and profound study of the Bible had made him feel surer than ever of his own religious ground; when nearly twenty years' experience as a country clergyman had rendered him familiar with the spiritual needs of the poor, and with the unspiritual wares of the ubiquitous friars; and, lastly, when the citations of the bishops, and the bulls of the Pope, had shown him that his days of free speech, and perhaps, too, his days of personal safety, were speedily drawing to an end.

Accordingly, from the year 1378 onwards, Wycliffe's enmity to Rome will be found to broaden and deepen, and to separate him more and more from his old supporters. It is not now the Oxford Schoolman whom we see, nor yet the ecclesiastical reformer, but rather a solitary figure somewhat after the likeness of one of the old Jewish prophets, abandoned by his old allies, and yet girding himself for a single-handed attack on the central citadel of the Catholic faith.

For Wycliffe now no longer limits his hostility to the undue *range* of the Pope's authority, but directs it against the institution of the Papacy itself, against the monarchical element in Catholicism. He declaims against the Holy See in terms of the most pungent bitterness, and even calls it the "poison" of the whole ecclesiastical system. It is not the wealth only, nor yet the mere conduct and mode of life of the clergy, that he now challenges, but the very principle

of sacerdotalism, and the metaphysical doctrine of transubstantiation,—the miraculous "making of the body of Christ,"—as its most concentrated form of expression. He even goes so far as to compare the rival pontiffs to "two dogs snarling over a bone," and suggests that the quickest way to end the fight would be to take the bone away. Evidently his mind had developed apace between his earlier Oxford days and the date of this great turning point of his career.

Accordingly it was very possibly under the stress of the present juncture that his mind was made up to bring forth what he believed to be the great antidote to the "poison" of Rome, and that the design of making a complete translation of the Bible, a task which he so often advocates in his writings, and which was long held, as it were, in solution in his thoughts, was now precipitated by the course of events. At any rate he seems at this time to have been busy in further developing the organisation of his institution of "poor preachers," or bible-clerks not holding any episcopal license, to act as missionary agents for bringing the Gospel home to the artisans and yeomen and peasantry of England. Probably they may have been intended to serve both as a counter-weight to the officious and predatory friars, "the spoilt children of the Papacy," and as a corrective to the lethargy and ignorance of the half-starved parochial clergy. Religious leaflets, and sheets of the New Testament, were distributed among these missioners as fast as the translation could be carried on. Explanatory

tracts and papers, written in idiomatic and pithy English, were poured out as supplementary aids to the work of teaching and preaching, for which they had been trained at Oxford and Leicester and elsewhere, and with which, like the itinerant preachers whom Wesley sent out broadcast some four centuries later, they were entrusted.

In 1379 appeared Wycliffe's treatise "*On the Truth of Holy Scripture.*" By the spring of 1381, just before the outbreak of what he terms the "lamentable conflict" of the Peasants' War, he had recovered from his dangerous illness of 1379, and was lecturing at Oxford against a belief nearly twenty generations old, the belief, namely, that, by virtue of the words of consecration in the Eucharist, an actual change of "substance," to use the Latin equivalent for an idea imported from Greek philosophy, was miraculously worked by every priest in the elements of bread and wine.

Early in 1382 he was cited by Archbishop Courtenay to appear before a Synod * at the priory of the Black Friars in London, the site of which is now occupied by the printing offices of the *Times*. His attack on the doctrine of transubstantiation, though it was rather a logical than a religious attack, for he was himself what is termed a consubstantiationist, had put the finishing touch to his increasing isolation. Notwithstanding that he neither expressed nor felt any doubt that spiritually and sacramentally there was a Real Presence in the Eucharist which defied definition, he was under no illusions as to the danger of his position.

* *Fasc. Zi.*, 272, 277 ; Wilkin's *Concilia*, iii., 157.

In his "*Truth of Holy Scripture*," to which reference has been made above, he admits that he is expecting that he will either be burnt, or else put out of the way by some other form of death.* As was said above, it is incredible that, if Wycliffe had not had such powerful protectors, if Rome had not been so organically weakened by the "Babylonian Captivity," and still more by the Schism, and if the national Church had not been so divided against herself, the authorities would have rested satisfied with bulls and synodical condemnations, or would ever have stopped short of the direst penalties in dealing with so audacious and dangerous an assailant.

It was to no purpose that John of Gaunt, who had no mind to add to his unpopularity by embarking in a doctrinal quarrel with the hierarchy, hurried down to Oxford in the vain hope of persuading Wycliffe to be silent on the subject of the Eucharist. Forced to decide between principle and expediency, the reformer had no hesitation in sacrificing the Lancastrian alliance to the cause of what he thought to be true. "*I am confident*," he said, "*that in the end the truth must prevail.*" Even his beloved University of Oxford, where his supporters were now powerless against the united authority of the Church and the Crown, was compelled to discard him, and he retired unmolested to Lutterworth, never to leave it again. On July 1, 1382, Hereford and some others of his party were excommunicated, though Wycliffe himself, probably from considerations of practical prudence, was still left severely alone.

Towards the close of the year the mental strain,

* *Ut sim combustione, vel aliâ morte extinctus.*

under which he had long gone on working with all his indefatigable industry and courage, brought on a stroke of paralysis. Two years later came the end. While celebrating mass in Lutterworth Church he was struck for the second time, and on the 31st of December he died. "Admirable," says Fuller in his quaint style, "admirable that a hare so often hunted with so many packs of dogs should die at last quietly sitting in his form."

Wycliffe's great bequests to his country were his translation and his personal character. He cannot be said to have organised any scheme of religious reform, and his followers, the Lollards, gravitated into a political faction holding opinions so extreme as to alarm the world around them, and to occasion a strong reaction.

The Wycliffe Bible was spoken of in the preceding chapter as being not merely a book but an event. There attaches to it, in other words, a historical as well as a literary importance. For while it announces that a new stage has been reached in the evolution of our native tongue, it marks also, as we have now seen, a momentous epoch in our religious development.

Chaucer, the herald of the Renaissance, is a far greater literary name in our annals than Wycliffe, the herald of the Reformation. It was Chaucer, no doubt, who by his genius impressed the literary stamp on our language; but it was Wycliffe who, in his own field, and addressing his own audience, made ready and prepared the way.

The rivalry between Norman-French and English had come at length to an end. Largely owing to the

loss of Normandy in the reign of King John, and to the loss of Aquitaine in the reign of Edward III., the continental invader had been gradually turning into an Englishman. In the twelfth century English had been to the dominant race nothing else but a foreign language. As the vernacular of everyday life it had naturally remained the spoken language of the subject population; but no Norman magnate of the twelfth century would have used English except under circumstances where his native tongue promised to be unintelligible to those whom he was addressing. With the fourteenth century there had come a great change. The conquered Saxon had at length completed the assimilation of his conqueror, and the Norman had become finally naturalised. While French still kept up its social position as the language of polite society, it had come to be the general practice for every gentleman to know the native English, inasmuch as the foreign settlers now felt themselves to be no longer Normans but Englishmen. The feeling of patriotism had, moreover, been intensified by the prolonged wars with France. The victories of Crécy and Poictiers could not but throw into relative disfavour the language of the defeated foe, and the national speech had been quick to feel the reaction.

Accordingly we find that from the literary point of view there is a very marked contrast between the first and second half of the century. Higden, a monk who lived during the earlier half of it, tells us that—

"Children in school *be compelled for to leave their own language and for to construe their lessons in French.*"

John of Trevisa, writing in the reign of Richard II., shows us the progress of the literary revolution. With reference to French he says—

"This manner is somewhat changed. For John Cornwall, a master of grammar, changed the lore in grammar school and construing of French into English. *So that now* (1385), *in all the grammar schools of England, children leaveth French and construeth and learneth in English.*"

In 1362 all pleadings in the courts of law were ordered to be drawn in English, "because the French tongue is much unknown," and in the following year, Parliament, a word be it observed of French lineage, was opened for the first time in an English speech.

The Wycliffe Bible is accordingly no isolated literary phenomenon. Its appearance coincides with a general movement towards the expression in a national language of the rapidly developing sense of nationality, and of this movement it is the greatest monument in prose that remains to us.

The position which this version occupies in our religious history is as notable as is its place in our literature. From the former point of view it represents the appeal of a man of spiritual mind—a man whose life had been devoted to battling against what he deemed to be corruption and superstition—to the consciences and to the unsophisticated instincts of the mass of his fellow-countrymen. It was born of Wycliffe's desire to provide a medicine for the sickness of the times, and to bring about a revival of the moral and personal element in religion. It represented his conviction that men are more than mere units in an ecclesiastical system. And,

lastly, it was his indignant protest against that divorce of creed from conduct, and of profession from practice, which was the abiding disgrace and scandal of regular and secular alike. It may be worth while to glance at the component elements of the ecclesiastical society of a century whose moral tone was as dissolute as it was sordid.

Monk and abbot and prior lived, all of them, in luxurious indolence; the bishops were in no sense spiritual overseers, but merely ambitious politicians and statesmen; the higher cathedral dignitaries were largely represented by Italian absentees who had been appointed to their deaneries and canonries by the Pope; the friars, who retained the old habits of mendicancy, but who had long since dispensed with asceticism, had become proverbial for their effrontery, their cupidity, and their capacity for unblushing imposture. They heard confessions, they preached, they administered the sacraments, they hawked about their cheap indulgences just as a strolling pedlar might hawk his wares. They abused the widespread influence which education and wealth, as well as the support of the monasteries and of the Pope, conferred upon them, in order to make their fortunes out of the ruin of the parochial priests whose tithes had been annexed by the regulars, and who, like the still lower order of chantry priests, were usually too ignorant to teach, and often almost too poor to live.

Wycliffe, so far as we know, was the first of our countrymen to conceive the idea of translating the whole of the Latin Bible into English. And not only did he conceive the idea, but he put it into

practical shape. Of like originality was his scheme for organising what was in effect a new religious order, an order of poor though not mendicant preachers, unfettered by any strict conventual vows, and yet with something of the culture and spirit of the Franciscan, and labouring by friendly intercourse with the people to bring the Scriptures within their apprehension. In these two respects our first reformer must be admitted to have been earliest in the field. Let us now see what it was that he may justly claim to have done for England and for the English Bible.

It is hardly possible without the aid of the historic imagination to realise fully all that the first appearance and the wide distribution of this translation really meant. "*Il n'y a que le premier pas qui coute*," runs the old French saying, and the first definite step towards any systematic evangelisation of the farmers and traders and peasantry of this country, by opening up to them the Scriptures, is due entirely to Wycliffe.

He has often been called an idealist and a visionary, and it must be confessed that the charge is not without foundation. But surely nothing could be less visionary than the carefully devised plan by which the long-forgotten teaching of Jesus Himself, and of His immediate disciples, was brought home to the minds of men and women whose religious experience had so far been practically confined to the services of the medieval Church and to the rhetorical preaching of the "Pardoners" of the day.

"Look here upon this picture, and on this," we almost seem to overhear John Wycliffe saying, "and

make your choice between the Founder of your faith and the friars, between the wordiness of the men who shrive and shear you, and the unadulterated word of God." The new teaching seems to have spread with wonderful rapidity. "*You cannot travel anywhere in England*," wrote one of his bitterest opponents, "*but of every two men you meet one will be a Lollard.*"

The educated portion of the clergy had of course their own Latin manuscript Bibles, and we have evidence that among them were to be found men who had acquired a sound Scriptural knowledge. But such men were the exception not the rule, for it was not Bible-teaching which in those ages formed the real staple of ecclesiastical work. The upper classes of the laity had also their own form of Bible for devotional use, seeing that a translation of the Vulgate had been made in the thirteenth century into Norman-French. "*As lords in England have the Bible in French*," writes* Wycliffe, about the date of the great Schism, "*so it were not against reason that they hadden the same in English.*"

In addition to the written Scriptures there were the dramatic scenes of the miracle-plays, and the rude pictures of the "*Biblia Pauperum.*" Poetical paraphrases, too, as we have seen, were in local circulation, such, for example, as "*Genesis and Exodus*," and "*Cursor Mundi*," and doubtless Wycliffe would be familiar with such works, but a poetical paraphrase is not a translation, nor is the educational effect of a roving manuscript in the least degree to be compared with the effect of well organised teaching by means of a trained missionary

* In his *De officio Pastorali.*

clergy. The thirteenth century was one of remarkable activity in the diffusion of the Scriptures, and the books of the New Testament had all, or almost all of them, been anonymously translated, by various hands working in various centres, before the central decade of the fourteenth century. No scholar, however, before Wycliffe had produced an English rendering of the entire Vulgate, nor had any man had the invincible courage to embark on what must have seemed the all but hopeless task of setting up, as the guide to daily life, a New Testament which spoke to each man in his own native tongue, and which was rendered plain and clear to him by the living voice of an interpreter making itself heard within the quiet precincts of his home.

Courage indeed was needed, for, whatever its intrinsic merits or demerits, Catholicism had created for itself a position of immeasurable authority and strength. During long centuries it had presided over the greater portion of human life, and had occupied the field unchallenged. It was in genuine sympathy with some of the deepest cravings of the human soul. It was clothed with tremendous sanctions both for time and for eternity. It was supported by vast resources of wealth and organisation. It exercised over the imaginations of men an almost boundless power. Through its vast army of monks and friars and clergy it monopolised almost all the craft and learning of the age. It was supported by a material backing of rich churches and abbeys and monasteries, by the fellowship of art and of letters, by the command of all educational and charitable

institutions. If such a Church as this had only been willing to set its own house in order, it is not easy to see how the great events of the sixteenth century would ever have come about. But Rome decided otherwise, and though during the fifteenth century Lollardy, in a religious sense, seemed to have been temporarily stamped out, yet the influences which Wycliffe had been able to set in motion were working their invisible and subterraneous work, so that, here a little and there a little, the soil was being secretly prepared for the advent of the Reformation.

Although the Wycliffe Bible is held to date (as has been already stated) from 1382, it found no expression in a printed form for nearly five hundred years. It was not until 1850 that the sumptuous edition, in four large quarto volumes, for which we are indebted to the industry of Forshall and Madden, was issued by the Clarendon Press with the following title, "*The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, with the Apocryphal Books, in the earliest English Versions made from the Latin Vulgate by John Wycliffe and his followers, edited by the Rev. J. Forshall and Sir F. Madden.*"

This admirable edition cost its authors some twenty years of labour, and involved the examination of not less than 170 manuscript copies. It will not have escaped notice that the title speaks of "versions" in the plural, and it is now an admitted fact that before the fourteenth century had run out two entirely separate versions of the Wycliffe Bible were in existence. Of these two the original version is attributed in part to Wycliffe

himself, and in part to his devoted friend and disciple, Nicholas of Hereford. (*See note at end of this chapter.*)

It is not possible to say at what precise date this original translation began to be made, but it was probably finished by the year 1382. The later version of 1388, which is often wrongly quoted as the Wycliffe Bible, is really a revision of the edition of 1382 by John Purvey, Wycliffe's curate at Lutterworth, and by others whose names are not known. It is significant of the times that both the earlier and the later version should have been anonymous. Without an episcopal license it was only at a man's own personal peril that he ventured to translate Scripture into the vernacular. It is true that until the year 1408 we can point to no direct ordinance of prohibition in England, for the authorities had seen no cause for alarm, but the mere fact that an episcopal license should at this time have become indispensable is sufficient evidence as to the changed attitude of the Church.* Indeed, the very existence of the Dominican friars, the Pope's watch-dogs of orthodoxy, could not fail to point men back to the relentless trampling out of the Albigensian heresy, and to the statute of the Council of Toulouse which was passed in A.D. 1229, and which enacts that no layman should be allowed to have any book either of the Old Testament or of the New, especially in a

* Foxe refers to numerous cases of prosecution for owning or reading the Scriptures in English, iii.,595-7 ; iv., 178, 221-3, etc. In 1414 a law was made enacting that all persons who read the Scriptures in the mother tongue should "*forfeit land, catel, lif, and goods from their heyres for ever*" (Eadie, vol. i., 89).

translation, "unless perhaps the Psalter, a Breviary, or the Hours of the Virgin."

In 1401 the statute book was disgraced by the monstrous Act "concerning the burning of heretics." In 1408 Archbishop Arundel made certain constitutions, one of which rendered it penal to read any of Wycliffe's writings or translations within the province of Canterbury, "until the said translation be allowed by the ordinary of the place, or, if the case so require, by the council provincial (Wilkin's *Concilia*, iii., 317).

Detected copies of the Bible, or of any of its component books, would consequently be destroyed, and when we bear in mind how difficult it must have been to escape detection, and how the multiplication of copies would necessarily be limited by the cost of parchment and by the expense of transcription, the survival for 500 years of as many as 170 manuscripts makes it clear that the Wycliffite translation must have been both widely distributed and carefully treasured.

Of these surviving copies it is interesting to know that not more than thirty belong to the original version of 1382, and that of the remainder, which reproduce the revision of 1388, the greater part were most likely written between the years 1420 and 1450, and at a time therefore when the veto of Archbishop Arundel would have become generally notorious. The only explanation can be, that in this matter of an English Bible men were quite ready to run the risk. Moreover, the nature of the manuscripts indicates that it was not merely the rich or the powerful who were thus willing to encounter what to them, perhaps, would have

been a merely nominal danger, but that it was also the comparatively obscure. Only a few of the copies which have come down to us are on a scale suited either for exalted dignitaries or for great libraries.* The large majority of extant specimens are of pocket size, and were obviously intended for ordinary folk and for daily use.

The testimony of Foxe, if we could rely on it, is in a similar direction. Considerable sums, he says, were paid even for detached sheets, and as much as a load of hay for the loan of a whole Testament for an hour a day. With regard to cost, it has been estimated that early in the fifteenth century a complete copy of the Bible would have been worth more than £30 of our money. We may add that specimens of the more ornate copies of the Wycliffe Bible have been traced up to the possession of Henry VI.; Richard III.; Henry VII.; Richard Duke of Gloucester; Edward VI.; and Elizabeth.

With respect to the version of 1382, while it is certain that the translation of the Gospels which it adopts is by Wycliffe, the internal evidence of style makes it more likely than not that the whole of the New Testament may be ascribed to him, though at present we have no direct proof that it was his personal work. If we turn to the Old Testament we are on surer ground. Among the treasures of the Bodleian Library there is a MS. which fortunately can tell its own tale. The translation is carried on continuously up to the book of Baruch. At this point it abruptly breaks off in

* *Eadie*, vol. i., 80.

the very middle of a verse (iii. 20), and a note has been added to call attention to the fact that Hereford's version here comes prematurely to an end. It would appear, therefore, that, while Wycliffe was busy at Lutterworth with the New Testament, his friend Hereford was at work in Oxford on the Old, but that he was suddenly interrupted by a citation to London as an ecclesiastical offender.

It is at any rate an ascertained fact that in July 1382 Hereford was excommunicated. Who it was that may have been responsible for completing the translation of the Old Testament it is not now possible to determine. Probably it may have been Wycliffe himself, or perhaps a group of his Oxford friends working under his general supervision.

Between Wycliffe and Hereford there is a sharp contrast of style, and a contrast of dialect as well. Wycliffe's work indicates wider practice as a translator, while Hereford is timid, cramped, and slavishly literal. Both use a dialect, but while Hereford inclines to the dialect of the South, Wycliffe (like Purvey) inclines to the dialects of the East-Midlands and of the North.

No sooner was this original version completed than its defects became evident. In point of style, being by different hands, it naturally lacked uniformity, and it was often awkward and stiff. Many of its renderings were inaccurate. The text which it translated was one that in the course of centuries, during which printing was unknown, had become exceedingly corrupt.

A revision was accordingly taken in hand at once,

with a view both to remedy these defects and to make the translation more idiomatic and less Latin in character; but Wycliffe did not live to see this revision completed. The details of the work do not come within the scope of a sketch whose design is of a historical rather than of a critical kind. Yet none the less it may interest the reader to have before him the author's own description of the plan on which the work was conducted.

To this Bible of 1388 there was prefixed a Prologue, and this Prologue is very generally supposed to have been written by Purvey.

The writer of it, whoever he may have been, explains his purpose and method as follows:—

"Though covetous Clerks are mad through simony, heresy, and many other sins, and despise and impede Holy Writ as much as they can, yet the unlearned cry after Holy Writ to know it, with great cost and peril of their lives. For those reasons, and others, a simple creature hath translated the Bible out of Latin into English. First, this simple creature had much labour, with divers companions and helpers, to gather many old Bibles, and other doctors and common glosses, and to make a Latin Bible somewhat true (*i.e.*, textually correct), and then to study it anew, the text with the gloss, and other doctors, especially Lire (*i.e.*, Nicholas de Lyra) on the Old Testament, who gave him great help in this work. The third time to counsel with old grammarians and divines, of hard words and sentences, how they might best be translated; the fourth time to translate as clearly as he could to the sense, and to have many good fellows and cunning at the correcting of the translation, for the common Latin Bibles have more need to be corrected than hath the English Bible* late translated."

We may conclude our notice of these fourteenth

**Wycliffe's Translation of* 1382.

century Bibles by giving some specimens from the original version of 1382.

The first shall be from Genesis i. 1, with the spelling more or less modernised:

"In the first made God of nought heaven and earth. The earth, forsooth, was vain within and void, and darknessis weren upon the face of the see. And the spirit of God was born upon the waters. And God said Be made light and made is light. And God saw light that it was good and divided light fro darkness, and clepide light day and darkness night. And made is even and morn one day."

Here, again, is Wycliffe's translation of the Lord's Prayer (St Matthew, chap. vi.):

"Oure fadir that art in heuenes, halwid be thi name, thi kingdom comme to, be thi wille done as in heuen so in erthe; gif to us this day oure breed ouer other substance; and forgeue to us our dettis as we forgeue to oure dettours, and leede us not in to temptacioun but delyuere us fro yuel."

The *Magnificat* (Luke i.) is thus rendered:

"And Mary seyde: My soul magnifieth the Lord, and my spiryt hath gladid in God myn helthe. For he hath beholden the mekenesse of his handmayde; Loo! forsooth of this alle generatiouns schulen seye me blessid. For he that is mighti hath done grete thingis to me, and his name is holy. And his mercy is fro kyndrede in to kyndredis to men dredinge him. He made myght in his arm, he scatteride proude men with mynde of his herte. He puttide down myghty men fro seete, and enhaunside meke. He hath fillid hungry men with goode thingis, and he hath left riche men voide."

Very characteristic in their directness are the words placed in the mouth of the blind man at the pool of Siloam (John ix. 11):

"I wente, and waischid, and sai."

The translation of Rom. xvi. 12 strikes a note of true tenderness:

"Persida, most dere worthe womman."

So again in Rom. i. 7:

"Alle that ben at Rome, derlyngis of God and clepid holy."

In 1 Cor. vi. 12 we have a good specimen of Wycliffe's use of assonance:

"All thingis ben *nedeful* to me but not alle thingis ben *spedeful*."

Finally, the translation of Matt. xxvii. 27 takes us back at a bound to the England of the middle ages:

". . . token Jhesu in the *moot hall*."

While in that of 2 Tim. ii. 4 (*nemo, militans Deo, implicat se negotiis secularibus*), there is a fine feudal ring:

"No man that holdeth knighthood to God inwlappith silfe with wordli redis."

NOTE.—A question has been recently raised which challenges the authenticity of the Wycliffe Bible. Dr Gasquet—whose title to be respectfully heard no one can for a moment dispute—has contended with great ingenuity, that the versions which have hitherto passed as embodying Wycliffe's work *are not his at all, but are translations made by his lifelong opponents the Bishops.* So far are they from being "Lollard," that they are versions approved by the medieval Church, and circulated with her sanction, just as were the fragmentary translations of earlier centuries. The Lollard Bible, if ever there was one, has, it is suggested, been lost.

It does not come within the sphere of this historical sketch

to pursue controversial topics, but the balance of opinion among students is, I think, unfavourable to Dr Gasquet's theory, persuasively as he presents it in "*The Old English Bible*." Ranged against him, for example, are historical authorities of the calibre of Matthew, Trevelyan, and Kenyon. The connection of Wycliffe's friends, Hereford and others, with the translations which we possess, is undisputed, and we know that, among their contemporaries, they were charged as being *pernicious innovators*. If they were nothing of the kind, why did they not make the obvious retort of *pointing to this (supposed) pre-existent orthodox version?* And why should Wycliffe go out of his way to argue from the existence of a *French* version to the propriety of making an English one, if an English one had long since been brought out by the Church? What, too, would there have been to prevent the ecclesiastical heirs of this 14th century version from printing it in Tyndale's day, and from thus taking the wind out of his sails? An interesting review of the whole controversy will be found in the *Church Quarterly Review*, January 1901. See also *English Hist. Review*, 1895, x. 91.

"THE rulers of the Church be all agreed to keep the world in darkness, to the intent that they may sit in the consciences of the people . . . to satisfy . . . their proud ambition and unsatiable covetousness . . . which thing only moved me to translate the New Testament.

(*Preface to Translation of the Pentateuch.*)

"If it would stand with the King's most gracious pleasure to grant *only a bare text of the Scripture* to be put forth among his people, like as is put forth among the subjects of the Emperor in these parts, be it the translation of what person soever shall please his Majesty, I shall immediately . . . repair into his realm and there most humbly submit myself, offering my body to suffer what pain or torture, yea, what death, his Grace wills, so that this be obtained."

(*Vaughan to Henry VIII., quoting from his second interview with Tyndale at Bergen in* 1531.)

"I call God to record that I never altered one syllable of His word against my conscience, nor would this day, if all that is in the earth, whether it be pleasure, honour, or riches, might be given me."

(*Tyndale's letter to Frith*, 1532.)

"How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill.
Whose passions not his masters are,
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Untied unto the world by care
Of public fame or private breath.
Who God doth late and early pray
More of His grace than gifts to lend,
And entertains the harmless day
With a well-chosen book or friend.
This man is free from servile bands
Of hope to rise or fear to fall,
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And, having nothing, yet hath all."

—H. WOTTON.

CHAPTER V

WILLIAM TYNDALE AND HIS WORK

AT the stage in the evolution of the English Bible which has now been reached it becomes necessary to break our journey; for the history of the manuscript Bible ends with Purvey's revision of 1388, while between that date and the appearance of Tyndale's New Testament there is a gap of nearly 140 years.

A convenient opportunity thus arises for a glance backward along the path by which we have been travelling, in order that its main features may become firmly imprinted on our memories before we resume our route.

It was, then, in the England of the Middle Ages that the earliest germs were discovered of a vernacular Bible. The idea of a complete translation of the Vulgate had not yet been conceived, and such versions as were already in existence had, for the most part, been made with the aim of bringing within the comprehension of the numerous clergy, who knew but little of Latin, those portions of the Scriptures which were in constant liturgical use.

The prevailing type of religion was ceremonial and

ritualistic, and the Latin Bible, as forming part of the Church's ritual, enjoyed as a rule a subordinate and complementary position rather than any substantial independence of its own. It was a book not for the uninstructed laity, whose minds and consciences were as yet in the keeping of their ecclesiastical guardians, but for the Church, who held it in trust for the edification of her people. It lay, in short, in the background.

With the fourteenth century there came a change. We found ourselves passing into a period during which the relative position of the Bible became sensibly affected. The mediatorial conceptions of the medieval system were no longer left unchallenged. The ecclesiastical and monastic type of social order was slowly making way for the civil and political type, and the State was preparing to take the place of the Church as a source of moral discipline. The centralising spirit of Catholic Christianity had come into conflict with the centrifugal spirit of nationality, and the ecclesiastical language of the Church had begun to feel the rivalry of the secular and independent tongues of modern Europe.

In his recoil from the spiritual apathy and moral degeneracy of the clergy, Wycliffe, who in the field of religion is the representative figure in the collision of the old order with the new, was more and more thrown into a one-sided and exaggerated antagonism to that principle of corporate life and social activity which lies at the very root of the Christian Church. Convinced in his own heart that the time had arrived when, in the cause of religious honesty and truth, it was essential that the

contrast between the principles of primitive Christianity and the principles of the spiritual teachers of his day should be effectually exposed, he determined that, as far as in him lay, the nation should have an opportunity of making the comparison. It was certain that the bishops and friars had no intention of bringing the common people to the Bible. At his own cost, therefore, and even at the risk of his life, the Bible should be brought to the people. Hitherto it had been the perquisite and the talisman of the Church. Henceforth it should be the common heritage and daily guide of the people at large. Hitherto it had spoken in a foreign tongue. Henceforth it should speak in English. The stone should be rolled away from the mouth of the spring. The medicine which had been ordained for the healing of the nations should no longer be prevented from ministering to the deep-seated and many-sided sickness of the age. Now that England had come to realise her political independence, it should be his endeavour to place in her hands the book which best could nerve her for the struggle through which her spiritual independence had still to be won.

Such, as we understand it, was Wycliffe's ideal, and thus in the fourteenth century the position occupied by the Bible may be described as undergoing a threefold change. In the place of a fragmentary English Bible there was to be a complete one. In addition to a Bible in a dead language for the private study of the clergy and for the ritual of public worship, there was to be a vernacular Bible brought by the agency of trained itinerant preachers to the home door. In the place of a

mystical Bible, interpreted only by ecclesiastical authority, there was to be an open Bible accessible to laity and clergy alike.

In two respects, however, the Wycliffite versions must be said to belong still to the Middle Ages. They had no printing-press behind them to spread abroad, to multiply, and, what was equally important, to cheapen them. Furthermore, they were but translations of a translation, done into the half-formed and transitional dialect of the day, and not translations from the original Hebrew and Greek done into the English of all time. For this great development we have to look across the intervening years which separate Wycliffe from Tyndale.

It is easy to see how far these two fellow-labourers in the field of religious reform are separated the one from the other. It is at first sight less easy to discover the link by which they are connected. But from a historical point of view perhaps we may find such a link in Lollardy. "Lollard" was the nickname given to Wycliffe's followers, but the origin of the name is uncertain.* It has been somewhat fancifully derived from "lolium," the Latin word for tares, as denoting the tares among the spiritual wheat, but more probably

* It may be that two different words became confused both in form and sense. "Lollardus," in medieval Latin, is used of one who mumbles hymns and prayers; while "loller," in Middle English, means a vagabond, or an idler. ("*Piers the Ploughman*," C text x. 213-18). With regard to the punning derivation from "lolium," see *Political Poems*, "Against the Lollards":

"*Lollardi sunt zizania,*
Spinæ, vepres, ac lollia,
Quæ vastant hortum vineæ."

it is akin to "lullen," or "lollen," to sing, and has reference to the singing among the Lollards of psalms or hymns. If this be the correct derivation the nickname would correspond to our modern "cant."

This Lollardy had two sides, the one religious, the other social and political, and it seems never to have quite succeeded in keeping these two sides separate and distinct. It was both as a traitor and as a heretic that Sir John Oldcastle, for example, who suffered death as a Lollard in 1417, was burnt on the gallows in St Giles' Fields, while the career of Wycliffe himself has a strongly political colouring.

So far as Lollardy in England was a religious movement its progress after Wycliffe's death was soon arrested, partly by its lack of organisation and of influential leaders, partly by the withdrawal from it of the proprietary classes who were naturally alarmed at its association with agrarian revolution, and who were not slow to see that an attack on Church property might readily develop into an attack on property as a whole; and lastly, by the combined efforts of Church and Crown, under Archbishop Arundel, to burn it out at the stake.*

The social and political side of Lollardy does not in any way concern us here, but what does closely concern us is the fact that, though Church and State were so far successful that they frightened the movement out of sight, they did not ever succeed in wholly rooting it out. It happened, moreover, that, through the marriage of Richard II. with Anne of Bohemia, the teaching of Wycliffe, transmitted over the seas to Huss and Jerome,

* The Act "De hæretico comburendo" was passed in 1401 A.D.

and surviving their martyrdom, re-appeared in due course in the person of Luther, and was instilled through Luther's influence into Tyndale.

We have already seen how strong the indications are of the wide diffusion in England of the Wycliffite Bible. It may now be added that incontrovertible evidence of the survival of Lollard tracts and pamphlets, such as Wycliffe's tract against Transubstantiation, called the *Ostiolum*, or *Wicket*, is afforded by their being found included among the heretical books whose owners were prosecuted in the reign of Henry VIII. Richard Hun, for instance, who died in the Lollard's Tower, was accused in 1514 of having in his possession "the damnable works of Wycliffe," and Foxe mentions another prosecution where the specified book was the *Wicket* above-mentioned. Further, we have the evidence of Erasmus, who writes in 1523 to Adrian VI., that the Wycliffite party "was not extinguished, but only overcome"; and of Tunstall, Bishop of London, who in the same year writes to Erasmus, "It is no question of some pernicious novelty, *it is that new arms are being added to the great band of Wycliffite heretics.*" Thus it would seem that while doctrinal Lollardy did not ever, even in the lifetime of Wycliffe, attain to the dimensions of a national movement, and that while after his death it lost whatever solidarity his own personal influence had lent to it, still it cannot be said to have died entirely away. If the flames were extinguished the embers smouldered on, so that when, in 1529, a royal proclamation appeared against unorthodox writings, it is in no way surprising to find that no particular

distinction is drawn between "Lollardies" and other "heresies and errors."

This survival of Lollardy as the continuing protest of religious discontent is sufficient proof that the Wycliffite attack upon the medieval Church system had failed to achieve its object. Its leader, it may be remarked, belonged to the less popular and influential party among the Schoolmen, namely, to the moderate Realists or liberal-conservatives, as opposed to the Nominalists or philosophical radicals whose star was at that time largely in the ascendant on the Continent. Having regard to the intellectual backwardness of the age it had been delivered prematurely. It lacked system and was too negative in character. It had depended too much on one man. It had been without the glow of religious enthusiasm, and without any central principle to serve its supporters as a rallying cry. Something on the other hand had been done in the preparation of the soil, and something too in the actual sowing of the seed, but the time of harvest was not yet come. The colour and texture of the fifteenth century in England is not religious but political. It is a century mainly taken up with foreign and civil war, the wars with France, and the wars of the Roses. Midway through it the voice of reason and common sense in dealing with Lollardy makes itself heard for a moment in a man who has been called the Arnold of his day, Bishop Pecock, but only to be instantly suppressed. Before its close the Bishops had more than recovered from their scare; religious reform seemed to have been relegated to the Greek Calends; and the clergy, lulled

into fancied security through their close alliance with the Crown, had fallen torpidly back into the old groove of indifference and obscurantism.

Tyndale therefore had the same aim and the same incentive in his work as Wycliffe, though he was born into a very different age. It was from the breakdown of the Church as a moral and educational agency, and from her gross and persistent neglect of the spiritual trusts committed to her charge, that both reformers alike derived their determination that the Gospel should be opened out through the medium of an English Bible to the people. Accordingly, in his preface to "*The Obedience of a Christian Man*" (1528), we find Tyndale writing thus :—

"Alas ! the curates themselves, for the most part, wot no more what the New or Old Testament meaneth than do the Turks—neither care they but to mumble so much every day as the pie and popinjay speak, they wot not what, to fill their bellies withal. If they will not let layman have the word of God in his mother tongue, yet let the priests have it, which for the great part of them do understand no Latin at all, but sing and patter all day with the lips only that which the heart understandeth not."

To Tyndale's evidence let us add a quotation from Cardinal Bellarmine, which points in a like direction :—

"Some years before the rise of the Lutheran heresy there was almost an entire abandonment of equity in the ecclesiastical judgments ; in morals no discipline, in sacred literature no erudition, in divine things no reverence : religion was almost extinct."

But if as a religious reformer Tyndale does but catch the torch from Wycliffe's hand, we must not allow ourselves to forget that the two men are chronologically separated by the whole interval of an intellectual revolution. It is impossible to pass from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century and not to take

account of the greatest upheaval of the human mind that the world had seen since the introduction of Christianity. To that wonderful regeneration of the West, which we call the Renaissance, or the "new birth," no one date can be assigned, nor can its all-pervading spirit be taken captive and imprisoned in any verbal definition. For its earliest harbingers we must go far back into the Middle Ages. In its effects it remains in active operation among us at this very day. Its rays light up the intellectual transition to the modern world, a world which was no longer to see everything through theological glasses. Expressed in terms of literature, we call it the Revival of Letters. Expressed in terms of religion, it is the Reformation. Contrasted with medievalism, the Renaissance is like a bright fresh morning after a close and sultry night. It represents the change in men's view of life from asceticism to freedom and humanism; from the monastery to the college; from a civilisation based on Feudalism and educated by the Latin Church, to a civilisation educated by Science and based, within the restrictions of nationality, on a spiritual inter-community of ideas and interests.

In the wake of the literary revival by which this great movement was ushered in, there arose that wonder-working spirit of adventure and of maritime discovery, under whose influence the boundaries of the earth were pushed back, and the edifice of patristic geography was shattered to pieces. In 1492, Columbus with the aid of the mariner's compass discovered the New World. In 1497, Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape of

Good Hope. In 1520, Magellan circumnavigated the globe. The year 1543 is the date of the death of Copernicus, whose reading of the riddle of the sky was soon to revolutionise the whole science of astronomy, and with it man's ideas of his physical position in the universe.

For our immediate purpose, however, the primary points of interest are: first, the revival of letters; and next, the invention of printing, coupled as that invention was with the introduction into Europe of the manufacture of cheap paper.

Dates, as we are all but too well aware, are but dry things at the best, but in a period such as that which we have now reached they are almost indispensable. It was the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 which drove Greek scholars westward, just at the time when the appetite for the re-discovered classics was growing keen. The necessary literary apparatus for opening out a knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures soon began to be brought into the field. The public teaching of Greek was introduced into the University of Paris in 1458. The earliest Greek grammar was published in 1476, and the earliest Hebrew grammar in 1503. Among the first products of the printing press was the Gutenberg (or Mazarin) Bible in or about the year 1455. In 1470 Caxton introduced printing into England. The first Hebrew Lexicon dates from 1506, the first Greek Lexicon from 1480. Grocyn, who had learnt Greek in Italy, was its earliest teacher in Oxford in 1492. In 1488 appeared the first printed Hebrew Bible, and in 1516 the first printed New Testament by Erasmus. 1520

is the date of the famous Complutensian Polyglot.* Before the end of the fifteenth century some eighty editions of the Latin Bible had been published in Europe, and national versions of the entire Bible were circulating in German, Italian, French, Danish, Dutch, Russian, Slavonic, Bohemian, and Spanish. But an English printed Bible had yet to come.

For that great gift, bought for his country at the price of his blood, England has to thank Tyndale, a man who, if he had "the defect of his qualities," is surely one of the noblest figures in the whole annals of the Reformation. If Luther represents for us the splendid enthusiasm of the time, Erasmus its scholarship and wit, and Rabelais its joyousness of humour, there is no one who more worthily embodies the intensity of its religious seriousness than he who shares with Aidan the title of the "Apostle of England," William Tyndale.

Tyndale is the true father of our present English Bible. He is so notwithstanding the fact that he neither originated the idea of a popular version, nor was the first to make one. In these respects the glory rests with his predecessor, Wycliffe. But the English of the fourteenth century is not our English, and Wycliffe's Bible is not a translation at first hand, but only a translation of the Latin Bible.

* This Polyglot Bible derives its name from *Complutum*, the ancient name of Alcala, where a university was founded in 1500 by Cardinal Ximenes. It was in six folio volumes, and contained the Hebrew and Greek texts, the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and the Chaldee paraphrase of the Pentateuch, with a Latin translation; Greek and Hebrew grammars, and a Hebrew dictionary.

For felicity of diction, and for dignity of rhythm, Tyndale never has been and never can be surpassed. The conception of the Bible as essentially the people's book came down to him as we have seen from Wycliffe, but his splendid embodiment of that conception in the popular English of his own day is the work of his individual genius. Far from vulgarising the Bible by lowering his standard of language down to the popular level (as though a man should descend to render Shakespeare's Comedies into the dialect of the modern farce), he lifted the common language, in a true nobility of homeliness, up to the sublime level of the Bible. He worked, like a sane and sound scholar, on the principles of grammar and philology. He endeavoured, in a spirit of unpedantic sincerity and conscientiousness, to find out what it was that each sacred writer had meant to say, and then to say it in plain and vigorous Saxon-English with all the idiomatic simplicity, and grace, and stateliness which characterise the Authorised Version, and which our latest revisers might with advantage have been more zealous than they have been to emulate and to preserve. For in the tone of our English revisions there is abundant evidence of how much we owe to the spell and charm of the literary type presented to successive workers from the very beginning as their model, and of the truth of the old Horatian maxim :—

> "Quo semel est imbuta recens servabit odorem
> Testa diu." (*Epist.* I. ii., 70.)
>
> "The perfume that was given it when new
> Clings to the earthen vessel long years through."

Tyndale did not live to translate the entire Bible.

If we include the MS. which he left in the hands of his literary executor, John Rogers, we have from his pen :—

I. The Old Testament as far as 2 Chronicles, inclusive.

II. The Book of Jonah.

III. "The Epistles out of the Old Testament which are read in the Church after the use of Salisbury;" comprising various passages from the Prophetical Books and from the Apocrypha.

IV. The New Testament.

It has been estimated that, of Tyndale's work as above specified, our Bibles retain at the present day something like eighty per cent. in the Old Testament, and ninety per cent. in the New. If this estimate may be accepted no grander tribute could be paid to the industry, scholarship, and genius of the pioneer whose indomitable resolution enabled him to persevere in labours prolonged through twelve long years of exile from the land that in his own words he so "loved and longed for," with the practical certainty of a violent death staring him all the while in the face.

The life of this gifted translator may be divided into the four following periods :—

First, his period of training at Oxford and Cambridge. Tyndale's university life must at least have occupied the eleven years between 1510 and 1521, and very possibly it may have been of still longer duration, seeing that he may have gone up to Oxford even earlier than 1510.

Secondly, his residence in Gloucestershire as private chaplain to Sir John Walsh from 1521 to 1523.

Thirdly, his London life of nearly a year in the house of Humphrey Munmouth of Allhallows, Barking.

Lastly, his life and work on the Continent, between 1524 and 1536, both as a translator and also as the most prominent and powerful controversial English writer, next to More, of his day.

With his controversial writings, though they are of the first importance for the understanding of Tyndale's doctrinal views, we are here only so far concerned as they served to intensify the hostility that was excited by the appearance of his New Testament, considered as it was to bear the taint of heresy.

Speaking generally, it may be said that up to the year 1523 Tyndale remained more or less the disciple of his earliest instructors, John Colet and Erasmus. Thenceforward he felt very strongly the influence of Luther, and we need hardly remind our readers that between Erasmus, the unimpassioned man of letters, the ironical critic and "candid friend" of the Church, and Luther, the impulsive and passionate dogmatist, there lies the deep chasm of the Augustinian, or, as we now call it, the Calvinistic, theology.

It is a strange thought that, in the venerable and apparently interminable controversy which for so many ages has torn the thinking world asunder,—the controversy between free-will and necessity,—it should have been from the ranks not of the vindicators of man's spiritual initiative, but from the ranks of the rigid Predestinarians, that the great religious reformers are

seen emerging. That they might gain the spiritual force and vigour which were indispensable for the task to which they had set their hands, they had first of all to be inspired with a conviction of the mysterious and irresistible inner working of the grace of God. To take but one illustration, Luther, whose name suggested this brief digression ; Luther,—the Arminius of modern Germany, the man to whom no small part of Europe owes its moral freedom,—Luther himself was a thorough-going theological fatalist.

William Tyndale was of Gloucestershire birth, but at what place he was born, and in what year, is not certainly known. Probably it may have been at Slymbridge, near Berkeley, and not later than 1490.

His comparatively brief span of life comprises a period rich in great events. Within it are included "the tragedy of Luther" ; the career of the brilliant and cosmopolitan Erasmus ; the rise and fall of Wolsey ; the sack of Rome by the forces of Charles V. ; the ecclesiastical breach between England and Rome ; the submission of the clergy to the Crown ; the "reign of terror" under Thomas Cromwell ; the dissolution of the monasteries ; the endeavours of Fisher, Colet, More, and Erasmus, to bring about a peaceful reform of abuses without breaking up the religious unity of Christendom ; the publication of Calvin's "*Institutes*" ; the adoption of the Reformation by Geneva ; and the first appearance of an English New Testament, which, notwithstanding every attempt made to suppress it, was soon to be followed by a complete Bible circulating with the express sanction of the King himself.

For Tyndale's early history our only authority is Foxe. From him we learn that—

> "William Tyndale was . . . brought up from a child in the University of Oxford, where he grew and increased as well in the knowledge of tongues and other liberal arts, *as especially in the knowledge of the Scriptures, whereunto his mind was singularly addicted*, insomuch that he, lying then at Magdalen Hall, read privily to certain students and fellows of Magdalen College some parcel of divinity, instructing them in the knowledge and truth of the Scriptures."

The expression "from a child" is hardly what we should have expected, and it is moreover far too indefinite to be of service. There is nothing improbable, however, in supposing that Tyndale's early teachers thought him a lad of promise, and that his exceptional turn for languages had already begun to discover itself. If so, he may well have gone up to Oxford before the average age, and perhaps such a conjecture gains additional plausibility from the fact that Magdalen Hall was a place so conspicuous for classical study under the auspices of Grocyn, Linacre, and William Latimer, that it went by the suggestive name of "Grammar Hall."

The authorities give 1515 as the date of Tyndale's M.A. degree, after obtaining which he left Oxford for the sister University of Cambridge, though for what reason Foxe does not say. The usual explanation is that he was attracted thither by his desire to hear Erasmus, who was the Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity and also Greek Reader, but this explanation is at issue with the known dates in the case, for Erasmus left Cambridge before 1514. And this same troublesome chronology must be suffered, we fear, to deprive us of the pleasure

WILLIAM TYNDALE. [*Face p.* 125.
(*From an Engraving by* W. Humphrys.

of picturing the young Bible-student listening while at Oxford to Colet's famous lectures on St Paul's Epistles, inasmuch as Colet was back in London in 1505, and may probably have left Oxford during 1504.

It is probable that Tyndale was driven from Oxford by the "Trojan" party, who were labouring with so much diligence to suppress the "Greeks" of the New Learning, and it may also be that the Bible readings to which Foxe markedly refers had got him into trouble with the University doctors. But whether our future translator did or did not actually listen to Colet's lectures at Oxford, or to those of Erasmus at Cambridge, is a matter of no great practical importance. It will suffice us if we can picture in our minds the formative influences under which his mind was maturing during the eleven critical years when the youth was growing into the man.

We know that he had a gift for languages; we know also that, as is shown by the Bible readings which he organised at his Hall, he was a diligent student of Scripture. Even if he may have missed the privilege of hearing Colet's actual voice, he must in any case have been breathing for several years an intellectual atmosphere charged with the spirit of that remarkable man's teaching. What, then, was that spirit?

Towards the end of the fifteenth century Grocyn and Linacre, just returned from Italy, had begun to teach Greek in Oxford. It was Colet who carried on their work. He represented the influence of the "New Learning" as reflected in a naturally religious mind. If tradition may be trusted, he had while in

Florence come under the magic spell of Savonarola. He delivered at Oxford a course of lectures on St Paul, by means of which he sought to revive once more the historical and devotional study of the Bible, a study which, since the great days of Bishop Grosseteste of Lincoln, in the thirteenth century, had become all but obsolete. He wished to make the Christian faith a practical thing, a working principle quickening the spiritual life. He threw his whole soul into the endeavour to give reality and freshness to the apostolic letters by placing his listeners as far as possible in the position of those whom St Paul was addressing. It can hardly be doubted that Tyndale's receptive mind must have felt the full force of this novel departure from the old scholastic methods of interpretation.

From Oxford Tyndale carried with him to Cambridge a sound knowledge of Greek and Latin, together with an interest in the study of the Scriptures, intensified by a sense of that quality of unaging truth and nearness which the teaching of Colet had revealed in them. The great Erasmus would at this time just have left Cambridge, where he had found the atmosphere, both physical and intellectual, too thoroughly uncongenial for a prolonged stay. Of the New Learning in its intellectual aspect Erasmus was the very incarnation. He brought the dry dispassionate light of a highly educated common sense to bear on the problems of the life around him. Both Colet and More were his intimate friends. Unlike Colet in many ways, Erasmus was heartily at one with him in the desire to redeem men from the curse of

ignorance. He was at one with him also in the conviction that the Bible should be faithfully translated and made generally accessible. In the "Exhortation" with which he prefaced his New Testament he writes as follows:—

"I totally dissent from those who are unwilling that the sacred Scriptures, translated in the vulgar tongue, should be read by private individuals. I would wish even all women to read the Gospel, and the Epistles of St Paul. I wish they were translated into all languages of the people. I wish that the husbandman might sing parts of them at his plough, and the weaver at his shuttle, and that the traveller might beguile with their narration the weariness of his way."

He saw—no man saw it more clearly—that the densest ignorance prevailed as to what the Bible really was, as to what Christianity was meant to teach, as to what the greatest of the early Fathers had written, and as to all that we had to learn from the wisdom of Greece and Rome.

During his residence at Queen's he was hard at work, day after day, up in his rooms in the old tower, in preparing for the Press a volume which was to prove of immeasurable importance in fertilising the parched fields of scholastic theology. That work reached the University of Cambridge in 1516, which was probably Tyndale's second year of residence. It is not often that two intimate friends have enjoyed the distinction of each producing in the self-same year a book which is destined to achieve literary immortality. Such, however, was the case with Erasmus and More. Erasmus' New Testament and More's "*Utopia*"* both

* See Brewer's *Henry VIII.* (1884), vol. i., p. 285; and Seebohm's *Oxford Reformers*, p. 321.

saw the light together, and each in its own way these two works mark the new and liberal spirit in which the foremost men of the day were endeavouring to deal with its changed conditions.

In the same year also, copies would have been circulating, in the common rooms of the Universities, of that notable proclamation of Indulgences by Pope Leo, the main object of which was to raise money for the building fund of St Peter's. In 1516, too, was published Erasmus' great edition of *Jerome*, the author of the Latin Vulgate.

The circulation of a New Testament in Greek would naturally be hailed as giving speedy promise of a version in English, and it was Erasmus' Greco-Latin edition which would thus have afforded the main subject for discussion among such men as Richard Barnes, Thomas Cranmer, Hugh Latimer, Miles Coverdale, Thomas Bilney, and William Tyndale, who were all probably in residence when it first appeared. The volume included the Greek text and a new Latin translation by Erasmus in parallel columns. It comprised also a series of clear annotations explaining various changes of reading as compared with the Vulgate, and a preparatory "Exhortation," as earnest as it was powerful, in which Erasmus challenged both the neo-Paganism of the Italian school and the fossilised pedantry of the monkish divines.

It would be a grave misconception to measure the importance of this earliest Greek New Testament by its merely textual or critical value. To such value it has but little claim.* The few manuscripts which

* Erasmus himself describes his first edition as "precipitatum

Erasmus professed to collate were neither ancient nor of high authority. But though he did nothing to solve the critical problem, he did much in that he brought it forward for solution. The extraordinary effect of this book, followed as it soon was by his famous "Paraphrases" of most of the New Testament Scriptures, was due to other causes.

Hitherto the verbal inspiration and sanctity of the Latin Vulgate had been accepted without question. Now, for the first time, it was deliberately challenged and impugned. The challenge, moreover, was not from some obscure innovator who might with safety be ignored. It came from the most brilliant man of letters of the century. It came from the author of the "*Adages*," of the "*Praise of Folly*," of "*The Pocket Dagger of a Christian Man*," books which were already household words all over Europe. It announced a new mode of Biblical interpretation which installed history and philology in the place of tradition and dogma, and which claimed for the sacred writings, as Tyndale on his side claimed for them a few years later, that their meaning was what they really said, and not what they might, allegorically or mystically, have been supposed to say. In our own time, perhaps, men might have experienced something of the same sort of flutter of excitement if in the fulness of his intellectual powers Mr Gladstone had come before the world as the author of "*Ecce Homo*."

verius quam editum." The truth is that he hurried the work on with unscholarly haste so as to forestall the New Testament which was in course of printing for the Polyglot Bible of Cardinal Ximenes.

Erasmus was a man of peace, and to the day of his death he believed himself to be a loyal Catholic. It was therefore in no spirit of irony that he dedicated his New Testament, by permission, to the Pope. Like the English reformers of the school of the New Learning he pinned his faith to the advancement of knowledge, and of liberty of thought, as sufficient in themselves for the working out of the peaceful regeneration of a Church to whose abuses no one was more alive than himself. But it was not to be. In the autumn of 1517 there suddenly leaped out the spark which fired the smouldering discontent of Germany. When, on All Saints' Eve, October 31st, Luther affixed his famous Theses against Indulgences to the gates of the parish church of Wittenberg, the religious destiny of Western Europe hung for the moment upon a thread. What might have happened, if Charles V. and the Papal Curia had been minded to meet the Reformation half way, who is there that can tell? It is no part of our present task to follow Luther's fortunes, but, if we wish to understand the opposition which we shall find Tyndale encountering by-and-by, we must neither lose sight of his early relation to Erasmus on the one hand, nor of his admiration for Luther on the other.

Before he left Cambridge at the end of 1521 the Pope's bull, "Exsurge Domine," had been tossed into the fire, the English seaports had begun to receive what was soon to become a continuous stream of Lutheran literature, and the bright visions of those who had been looking forward to the self-reformation of a united

Catholic Church faded sorrowfully away. It would be an injustice to the party of Sir Thomas More not to remember that, after the Diet of Worms, they stood in the shadow of a great fear, namely, the fear which they not unnaturally entertained that the spread of Lutheranism in England would involve anarchy and schism, the dislocation of religious unity, and the dislocation of social order.

But it is time for us to return to Tyndale himself.

If we are ignorant of the reasons which took him to Cambridge, we are no better off with respect to the reasons which took him away. Perhaps he was too poor to stay up without a fellowship. Perhaps he felt a call towards a wider career than the University could well afford him. We cannot say.

At any rate, from the end of the year 1521 till 1523, we find him acting as private chaplain to Sir John Walsh, in Gloucestershire, and as the nominal tutor of his boys, of whom the eldest was not yet six years old. Their home was in the Manor House of Little Sodbury, some twelve miles north-east of Bristol, and they were people of recognised position in the county. They kept open house, and their hospitable table was not without its attractions for the abbots and divinity-doctors of the neighbourhood.

It so happens that we have good evidence of the condition into which the local representatives of the "ecclesia docens," or "teaching church," had allowed themselves to fall. A generation later than the time with which we are dealing, Hooper, then Bishop of Gloucester, made a visitation in his diocese. He

examined, so he reports to Cecil, 311 clergy. Of these he found no less than 168 unable to repeat the Ten Commandments, 31 ignorant of whence the said Decalogue came, 40 who could not repeat the Lord's Prayer, and about the same number who did not even know to whom it should be ascribed.

Nor was mere ignorance the only or the worst charge which could be brought against the clergy :—

"What man of real piety," cries Erasmus, in the preface to his new edition of the "*Enchiridion*," "does not perceive, with sighs, that this is far the most corrupt of all ages? When did ever tyranny or avarice prevail more widely or with greater impunity? When was more importance ever attached to mere ceremonies? When did iniquity abound with more licentiousness? When was charity so cold? What is read, what is said, what is heard, what is decreed, except that which savours of ambition and gain?"

Or let us listen to Hugh Latimer, preaching to an assembly of bishops at Paul's Cross :—

"Who is the most diligent prelate in all England? I will tell you—it is the devil. Of all the pack of them that have cure, the devil shall go for my money, for he ordereth his business. Wherefore, you unpreaching prelates, learn of the devil diligence. If you will not learn of God, for shame learn of the devil."

Religion and morality seemed to have parted company. Rites and ceremonies were not treated as mere adjuncts and aids to religion, they had practically become substitutes for it. The man who went regularly to confession and mass, and who occasionally made a pilgrimage to some venerated shrine and left a substantial offering behind him, had done all that was required of him. The Church, in fact, was organised less as an institution for spreading the teaching and

inculcating the spirit of its Founder, than as a vast system of insurance against the material penalties of sin.

At Little Sodbury, as elsewhere, the "crisis in the Church" was the leading topic of the day, and it appears that in the argumentative discussions which from time to time enlivened Sir John's table, the ecclesiastical magnates who were dining with him found the resident chaplain an extremely objectionable person. "As these men," we are told, "and Master Tyndale did vary in opinions and judgments, Master Tyndale would show them *on the book* the places by open and manifest Scripture." That must have been a procedure which was felt to be in the highest degree inconvenient.

One day, when these theological tiltings had been going on for some time, Lady Walsh asked her chaplain to explain why he thought that she ought to attach more weight to his views than to those of the notables who came to her house, and who were presumably men of some local reputation. To which artless inquiry Tyndale made no immediate reply, though for all that he had a reply in his mind.

Obviously it was not meet for an insignificant chaplain to measure himself with a great county lady. Yet perhaps he might overawe her if he could only bring up some heavy theological artillery to bear on her position. It would be no disgrace for her to lower her colours to Erasmus.

So he set quietly to work to translate the "*Enchiridion*," or "*Pocket Dagger of a Christian Soldier*," for

her ladyship's personal benefit. Erasmus had just republished this tract with a new preface, from which we have already quoted, in which the clergy of all ranks were vigorously chastised for their many delinquencies.

"I wrote," he says, "to display neither genius nor eloquence, but simply to counteract the vulgar error of those who think that religion consists in ceremonies, and in worse than Jewish observances, while they neglect what really pertains to piety."

This may be accepted as a very fair description of a little work which, unless Erasmus had been its author, would scarcely have excited the universal attention that it did. For the aim of it is simply to make religion of practical use in the living of life, and to catch the inner spirit of Christianity, a spirit of devotion not so much to a creed as to a Person.

"Then did Tyndale put into English a book called, as I remember, "*Enchiridion Militis Christiani*," the which he delivered to his master and lady. And after they had read that book those great prelates were no more so often called to the house, nor, when they came, had they the cheer nor countenance as they were wont to have; the which they did well perceive, and that it was by the means of Master Tyndale, and at last came no more there." *

By employing his leisure in preaching to crowded audiences in Bristol, it was not long before Tyndale provoked a summons before the diocesan Chancellor, a man of violent temper, who "reviled and rated him as if he had been a dog," and though no immediately serious consequences followed, still our chaplain was set a-thinking.

How had it come about that the Church was on one

* Quoted in Foxe's *Acts and Monuments.*

side and the Bible on the other?—Revolving the matter in his mind, he went to take counsel of "a certain doctor that had been an old chancellor to a bishop," and who, it has been plausibly conjectured, was the Oxford scholar, William Latimer. This ex-chancellor, who was a votary of the New Learning, was frankness itself. "Do you not know," he said, "that the Pope is very antichrist? I have been an officer of his, but I have given it up and defy him and all his works."

It is probably to this conversation that Tyndale's final determination to translate the New Testament may be referred. It was through reading the Bible that he himself had come to his present mind. If the same means were laid open for the benefit of others, and if, instead of "expositions clean contrary unto the meaning," the Scripture were once "plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue," they too might be turned from the service of "antichrist" to a higher and better service. Tyndale did not keep his design secret, but, while communing and disputing with a certain learned man he drove him to that issue that he said, "We were better without God's laws than without the Pope's"—Master Tyndale, hearing that, answered him, "I defy the Pope and all his laws." And then follows the passage which has been so often quoted:

> "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost."

Now that his contraband design had been divulged he had become more than ever a marked man, and it

was impossible for him, even under the protection of Sir John Walsh, to keep a whole skin in Gloucestershire. He resolved, therefore, to throw up his position at Little Sodbury and to try what could be done with friendly assistance in London.

About July or August 1523, in the middle of the excitement caused by the angry dissolution of a Parliament that had made so bold as to object to an arbitrary property-tax of four shillings in the pound, he arrived in the capital, armed with a letter of introduction from his patron, Sir John, to Sir Harry Guildford, Controller of the Household, a man of considerable learning, who was on terms of friendship with Erasmus and a personal favourite withal of the King. It was not, however, to the Controller that Tyndale would have to look for the patronage that he needed. It was to the Lord Bishop of London. If the New Testament was, as he then intended, to be translated in England, he must begin by obtaining episcopal sanction. Without this protection no printer would venture to undertake the risk of passing his sheets through the press. In addition he needed a shelter over his head, a quiet room to work in, and food; modest and simple requirements, it is true, but necessaries which a friendless priest in a great capital might yet find some difficulty in procuring.

The See of London in 1523 was held by Cuthbert Tunstall, who had studied as an undergraduate both at Oxford and Cambridge, and had taken his degree in Italy. He was known as a sound scholar in Greek and Hebrew, and as a friend of the New Learning, but he was strongly anti-Lutheran. Now it was in 1520

that Luther had been excommunicated, and during the winter of 1520-1 Tunstall, not yet a bishop, was living at Worms, a city which was soon to be the scene of the great Diet. While there he wrote urging Erasmus to exert his influence in arresting, or at least retarding, the Reformation movement. In 1521 Luther, already condemned by the Pope, was placed under the ban of the Empire. In that year also Henry VIII. won his proud title of "Defender of the Faith" by his reply, in defence of the seven sacraments, to Luther's "*Babylonian Captivity of the Church*," a reply in which we read that the King has determined that "*untrue translations shall be burnt, with sharp correction and punishment against keepers and readers of the same.*"

Meanwhile Wolsey had been actively employed in hunting down the heretical books which were fast pouring into England from over the seas, and in burning them at St Paul's. In 1522 Luther had published his German New Testament. Whether or not, therefore, by the date of Tyndale's visit Tunstall had got wind of his Gloucestershire addresses, the auspices were in any case anything but favourable for a private and unauthorised translator. But probably little or nothing of all this would have been present in Tyndale's unsophisticated mind.

By Sir Harry Guildford's advice he wrote to the Bishop and asked for an interview, leaving his letter at Old London House in St Paul's churchyard. In order to support himself in London he appears to have got temporary employment as a preacher in St Dunstan's-in-the-West, a few paces eastward of the

present juncture of the Strand with Fleet Street. His preaching brought him a most welcome and unexpected friend in Humphrey Munmouth, a rich London merchant. Munmouth was a travelled man, who had visited cities so distant as Rome and Jerusalem, and who, as it chanced, had business relations with certain members of the Tyndale family then engaged in the Gloucestershire cloth trade. "I heard the foresaid preach two or three sermons," writes Alderman Munmouth in 1528 to Wolsey, while in prison for protecting Tyndale, "and after that I chanced to meet him and examined what living he had. He said he had none at all."

When in due course Tyndale was summoned to London House, his interview with Bishop Tunstall came as a bitter disappointment and humiliation to him. As evidence of his knowledge of Greek, and of his qualifications as a translator, he had brought up to London with him a version which he had made of one of the orations of Isocrates. It availed him nothing. Whether it was that the uncouthness of his personal appearance and address was against him, or for some less unworthy reason, the polished and cautious prelate gave him the cold shoulder. "My lord answered me his house was full—he had more than he could well find (feed)—and advised me to seek in London." And now for the sequel.

"The priest came to me again" (so Munmouth goes on to say) "and besought me to help him, and so I took him into my house half a year, and there he lived like a good priest, as methought. He studied most part of the day and of the night at his book. I

did promise him ten pounds sterling to pray for my father and mother, their souls, and all Christian souls. I did pay it him when he made exchange to Hamburg. Afterwards he got off some other men ten pounds more, the which he left with me."

Humphrey Munmouth lived at Allhallows,* Barking, close to the Tower, and within a stone's throw of the parish Church; one of the very few medieval city churches which were spared by the great fire of 1666, and one, moreover, which will richly repay a visit at the present day.

Thus happily it chanced that Tyndale found board and lodging, and a rich well-wisher withal, at whose table he met London traders and merchants from the country towns, and from Germany, France, and Switzerland, listened eagerly to the talk of the day, and heard how the new Lutheranism was fast making way on the Continent, and how this violent uprising of Teutonic against Latin Christianity was revolutionising the attitude of English Catholics towards Church reform.

Looking to what are known to have been Munmouth's personal sympathies in religious matters, it is more than probable that some of the current Lutheran literature was to be found in his house, and that Tyndale there made acquaintance with it. Small wonder was it that as he came to learn more of the Catholic hierarchy in London, he should have been forced to realise that no English printer would dare to bring out

* Its vicar in the early years of the seventeenth century, Dr Robert Tyghe, was one of the revisers selected for the production of our Authorised Version, and three of his fellow-labourers were also Barking men.

his Bible, and that he must either abandon altogether the great hope of his life, or else face the risks and sorrows and hardships of exile.

"I understood," he says, "that not only was there no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, *but also that there was no place to do it in all England.*"

And there was another important matter which through Munmouth's friends he would come to understand as well. He would have had it explained to him that, whatever might be the case at home, there were ample facilities for printing on the Continent, that his labours would not be allowed to be frustrated for lack of money, and that, when the New Testament was actually out of the printer's hands, mercantile shrewdness would find some way of successfully smuggling it into England in spite of all the bishops on the bench.

Tyndale was a man of exceptional determination and pertinacity of purpose. His mind was soon made up. He felt that a work of incalculable importance had been given him to do, and that no sacrifice could be too great if only he might be enabled to carry the matter through. About the month of May 1524 he left London for Hamburg. How he was occupied between May 1524 and April 1525 is a point on which there is much difference of opinion. The unanimous evidence of his contemporaries supports the view that he was at Wittenberg with Luther, and that he worked there at his translation. His modern biographers, on the other hand, keep him in Hamburg for the whole interval. The question is

perhaps of no great moment, and as the discussion of it would take up too much space we prefer to leave it open. In 1525 we are again on sure ground.

It is not known how far the work of translation had advanced before Tyndale left England, but at any rate the New Testament seems to have been ready for the printers by the early summer of 1525.

It is natural, at the present stage in his history, to ask what special qualifications Tyndale had for his task, and on this subject there is fortunately abundant evidence. Sir Thomas More, a sufficiently hostile witness, writes of him that "before he went over the sea, he was well known for a man of right good living, studious, and well learned in Scripture." George Joye, also a hostile witness, speaks (in his "*Apology*") of Tyndale's "high learning in his Hebrew, Greek, Latin, etc." Spalatin, the confidential secretary and librarian of the Elector of Saxony, quotes one of the foremost of continental scholars, Herman Buschius,* as having said of Tyndale, whom he had come across at Worms in 1526, that "he was so skilled in seven languages, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, French, Spanish, and English, that whichever he spoke you would suppose it his native tongue."

It is worth noticing that in this enumeration German is not included, so that Tyndale may probably have acquired that language during his residence abroad, unless, indeed, Buschius is to be taken as not

* Herman Buschius was one of the joint authors of the celebrated "*Letters of Obscure Men*," and a friend both of Erasmus and of Reuchlin.

thinking it necessary to particularise a fact of general notoriety.

Thus the testimony of his contemporaries bears out the conclusion to which even the most superficial acquaintance with his New Testament must conduct us. Out of the several qualifications which are indispensable to a translator of the Bible, Tyndale was certainly possessed of three. He had a pure and reverential heart, he was a sound scholar, and he was endowed with a delicate sense of language. With these qualifications he worked on Erasmus' second and third editions of the Greek text with untiring industry, and with a keen sense of responsibility, having as his constant helpmates the Vulgate, the German of Luther, and, as above indicated, the Latin of Erasmus. These helps he used only as an independent scholar would use them, and never as a slave. As a translator he toiled alone, for his great friend Frith did not join him on the Continent till the year 1526, while the queer companion of his exile, William Roye, was never anything more to him than an amanuensis.

In the spring of 1525, having received from Munmouth the ten pounds which had been deposited with him, and which was now wanted for the printers, Tyndale moved to a city already famous for its presses, the city of Cologne. At Cologne 3000 copies were to be printed by Peter Quentel in a small quarto * edition,

* It may be well to explain that the designations "folio," "quarto," etc., do not mark the *size* of a book. The size depends, in each case, on the size of the original sheets on which the book is printed. If the sheets are folded but once, the book is a folio,

with a prologue, references, marginal notes, and divisions into chapters, but not into verses; and the printing had gone as far as "K" in the signature of the sheets, as far perhaps as St Mark, when the work was suddenly interrupted, and Tyndale and Roye had to pack up the completed sheets and make good a hasty escape.

There had been a spy in the camp, a certain John Cochlæus, a man known among his Roman Catholic friends as "the scourge of Luther," who had been driven from Frankfort in 1525 by the peasant insurrection, and who was living at this time in temporary exile at Cologne. Having a book of his own in their press, he chanced to hear Tyndale's printers boasting over their cups that before long all England would become Lutheran. Under the genial influence of Bacchus he elicited from these worthies full details as to a certain New Testament which they were printing. No time was lost in laying his information before the Senate of Cologne, who immediately took action upon it, and also in giving warning to Henry VIII., to Wolsey, and to Fisher. These events took place some time in September 1525.*

In addition to the foregoing there has been preserved a letter† to Henry from his almoner, Lee, after-

whatever its height and breadth may be. If folded four times it is a quarto; if eight times an octavo, and so on. In folios and octavos the wire-lines of the water-mark run perpendicularly, in quartos horizontally.

* Cochlæus' *Commentary on the Acts and Writings of Luther.*

† Ellis' *Original Letters*, Series 3, vol. ii.

wards Archbishop of York, dated December 2, 1525, in which he warns the King of the "danger and infection" which will ensue if this pernicious book be not "withstanded" to the uttermost. "This is the next way," he continues, "to fulfil your realm with Lutherans. . . . *All our forefathers, governors of the Church of England, hath with all diligence forbid and eschewed publication of English Bibles, as appeareth in Constitutions Provincial of the Church of England*," etc.

In October Tyndale and Roye arrived safely with the rescued sheets at Worms, a town which had by that time become strongly Lutheran. Here they soon found a printer, P. Schœffer, who was willing to undertake their business, and at his press a new edition was prepared (with the view of out-manœuvring the enemy) *not in quarto but in octavo*, and with neither prologue or notes, but only a short "Address to the reader" inserted quite at the end. Like the quarto edition, it was, of course, anonymous,* and bore no dedication.

It seems probable that, in addition to 3000 copies of the octavo edition, which was finished first, 3000 copies of the quarto edition were also published. In spite of the watchfulness of the ecclesiastical authorities both issues were hidden away among bales of various merchandise, and clandestinely smuggled into England as soon as navigation was open. Most likely, therefore, they arrived in London, and at other ports, during the spring of 1526, shortly after the historical scene, on

* The secret, however, was soon out, the clue being probably given by Roye's satirical "*Dialoge*," which he directed against Wolsey in 1526.

the shyppe/with Zebede their father /mendinge there nettꝭ/ and called them. And they with out taryinge left the shyppe and there father and folowed hym.

¶ And Jesus wēt about all galile/teachynge in there synagoges/ ans preachynge the gospell of the kyngdom/and healynge all manner of sycknes / and all māner diseases amonge the people. And hys fame spred a broade through out all siria. And they brought vnto hym all sicke people/ that were taken with dyvers diseases and grypyngꝭ/and them that were possessed with devyllꝭ/and those which were lunaticke/and those that had the palsy: And he healed thē. And there folowed him a greate noñbre of people/from galile/ and from the tencetes/and from ierusalem / and from iury/and from the regions that lye beyond iordan.

The fyfth Chapter.

vi. When he sawe the people/ he went vp into a mountaine/and wen he was sett/ hys disciples cam vnto him / and he opened his mouth/and taught them sayinge: Blessed are the povre in sprete: for thers is the kyngdom of heven. Blessed are they that mourne: for they shalbe comforted. Blessed are the meke: for they shall inheret * the erthe. Blessed are they which hūger and thurst for righte wesnes: for they shalbe fylled. Blessed are the mercyfull: for they shall obteyne mercy. Blessed are the pure in hert: for they shall se god. Blessed are the maynteyners of peace: for they shalbe called the chyldren of god. Blessed are they which suffre persecūcion for righte wesnes sake: for thers is the kyngdom of heven. Blessed are ye whē men shall revyle you/and persecute you/ and shal falsly saye all manner of evle sayingꝭ agaynst you for my sake. Reioyce ād be gladde/for greate is youre rewarde in heven. For so persecuted they the prophettꝭ which were before youre dayes.

* Erth.
The worlde thinkethe too possesse the erthe/and to defend there awne/when they vse violence ⁊ power: but christ teacheth that the world muste be possessed with mekenes only/ and with oute power and violence.

All these dedes here rehearsed as to norisshe peace/ to shewe mercy/ to suffre ꝑsecuciō/ and so forth/make not a man happye and blessed/ nether deserve the rewarde of heven: but declare and testifie that we archappy and blessede and that we shall have greate ꝓmociō i heven. and certyfyeth vs i oure hertes that we are goddes sonnes/ ⁊ that the holy goost is in vs. for all good thynges are geven to vs frely of god for christes blouddes sake ād his merittes

Shrove Sunday, February 11, of the solemn burning of heretical books before the gate of St Paul's under the great crucifix called the Rood of Northen.* "No burnt offering," so Campeggio had written off to Wolsey after this holocaust, "could be better pleasing to God."

The zeal of Wolsey's spies must indeed have been untiring, for notwithstanding that between 1525 and 1528 no less than six editions of Tyndale's New Testament (comprising probably some 18,000 copies) were published, yet out of all these only a mutilated fragment of one copy of the *quarto* issue is now in existence, and of the *octavo* edition only two copies.

The quarto fragment consists of thirty-one leaves, or sixty-two pages, containing a Prologue, a list of the Books of the New Testament, a woodcut of an angel holding up an inkstand into which St Matthew is dipping his pen, and a translation of his Gospel up to chapter xxii. 12. It is known as the *Grenville Fragment*, and is now in the Library of the British Museum. It was accidentally found by a London bookseller nearly seventy years ago, bound up with a treatise by Æcolampadius, the Swiss reformer, and was purchased by Thomas Grenville and bequeathed by him to the Museum. It will be seen that in this unique fragment we still possess eight of the actual sheets printed by Peter Quentel in Cologne before 1526, and preserved by Tyndale in his flight from Cologne to Worms. As the only surviving remnant of the first English New

* See Froude's *History*, vol. ii., pp. 42-3, who gives the year as 1527.

Testament that was ever printed, it is, of course, quite priceless.

Of the octavo edition, the one surviving complete copy (except that the title-page is wanting) is in the library of the Baptist College, Bristol, and the only other copy, which contains some six-sevenths of the New Testament, is in the library of St Paul's Cathedral.

The relation of Tyndale's quarto edition to the German New Testament of Luther is very close. The order of the books, the planning of the printed page, the way in which the text is arranged, the use of the outer margin for the "pestilent glosses," and of the inner margin for references to parallel passages, are all derived from Luther. Nor does the likeness end here. While many of the longer glosses or annotations are Tyndale's own, many others are either translations or abridgments, or expansions of Luther's. The "Prologue to the Epistle to the Romans," which came out in 1526, is also practically a paraphrase of the Preface which Luther had recently written to the same Epistle. These facts do not in the slightest degree reflect on the originality and independence of Tyndale as a translator at first hand of the Greek text; nor can any unprejudiced person who may take the trouble to compare his work with its source, and also with the versions to which (like a conscientious scholar) he constantly referred, feel any doubt whatever on the subject. But the resemblance to which attention has been directed throws light on the great influence which, after 1523, Luther exerted on his English fellow-labourer in the cause of the Reformation, and, when taken together

with the bitter hostility which had been excited by his controversial writings, and with the alarm that was created by the social incendiaries of Germany, it goes far to explain the feeling which a "Lutheran" New Testament, appearing in England, would naturally arouse among the loyalists of the old Church.

Such a feeling caused Tyndale no surprise.

"In burning the New Testament," he wrote in 1527, "they did none other thing than I looked for; no more shall they do if they burn me also, if it be God's will it shall so be."

It is only just to Tyndale to add, that, in his own estimation, he was neither a Lutheran nor indeed a sectarian of any kind. In the "*Protestation*," printed in his New Testament of 1534, he vows that he never wrote

"Either to stir up any false doctrine or opinion in the Church, or to be the author of any sect, or to draw disciples after me, or that I would be esteemed above the least child that is born, but only out of pity and compassion which I had, and yet have, on the darkness of my brethren, and to bring them to the knowledge of Christ."

The reader may be amused at this point in our narrative with a story connected with the crusade against Tyndale's Testament, for which we are indebted to the old English Chronicler, Hall.

In August 1529, Sir Thomas More and Tunstall, Bishop of London, were at Cambray, watching over the interests of England in the treaty then being negotiated with Germany, one provision of which was to forbid the printing and circulation of heretical books.

Tunstall came home *viâ* Antwerp, where he made a bargain with one Augustine Packington, a merchant in a large way of business, with a view to a grand seizure of New Testaments. "The Bishop," writes Hall, "thinking he had God by the toe, when, indeed, as he after thought, he had the Devil by the fist, said, 'Gentle Mr Packington, do your diligence and get them, and with all my heart I will pay whatsoever they cost you, for the books are erroneous and nought, and I intend surely to burn them at Paul's Cross.' So Packington came to William Tyndale and said, 'William, I know thou art a poor man, and I have gotten thee a merchant.' 'Who?' said Tyndale. 'The Bishop of London.' 'He will burn them,' said Tyndale. 'Yea, marry,' quoth Packington. And so forward went the bargain; the Bishop had the books, Packington the thanks, and Tyndale the money."

Tyndale appears to have laid out some of this money in buying from a certain Vorstermann of Antwerp the blocks for the rude woodcuts in his "*Exodus*," of which he made use to illustrate the Jewish Tabernacle and its furniture.

Such, then, in outline is the history of our earliest edition in English of the New Testament. But Tyndale had no intention of resting content with what he had achieved. He was soon busily engaged on the Old Testament. In 1530 there accordingly appeared a new volume containing a translation of the Pentateuch from the original Hebrew. In 1531 was published the Book of Jonah with a lengthy Prologue in which the then condition of things ecclesiastical in England

is ably surveyed.* How and when Tyndale may have contrived to acquire his knowledge of Hebrew is not known, but that he had by this date acquired it is certain. Most probably he had made the most of the assistance of the friends whom he had formed among those learned Jews who were to be found scattered abroad in every considerable city of the Netherlands.

We come next upon what is a most remarkable feature in Tyndale's work. It is very rare to find a man who can throw into the labour of revision the same amount of power and genius which he may instinctively and readily have devoted to his first love in translation. Now in 1534 there came out a revised edition† both of the Pentateuch of 1530 and of the New Testament of 1525, and this latter has always taken rank as its author's masterpiece. The corrections in this revised Testament amount to some thousands. Prefaces are added to each Book, except to the Acts and the Book of Revelation; the original glosses are all re-written and carefully toned down, so as to be more explanatory and less polemical; a translation is added of the "Sarum" Epistles, and in short the edition is almost transformed into a service book, with the Church lessons clearly marked off.

* Only one copy of this book appears to be now in existence. It was discovered in 1861 by Lord Arthur Hervey, Bishop of Bath and Wells, in the library at Ickworth, bound up with a book which had been there for many generations.

† In this edition the title-page has Tyndale's name, and the Preface is headed, "William Tindale yet once more to the Christen reader."

But it is not merely that this great edition bears witness to the immense pains which Tyndale had devoted to improving it in the light of his own remarkable advance in scholarship. It is that we find in it the same quality of literary inspiration which gave its character to the earlier book, and are made to feel that, high as this wonderful man stands as a translator, he may yet claim to stand quite as high as a reviser. These matters, however, belong rather to a critical than to a historical review, and it would be out of place to go into detail in illustration of them in these pages.

It was a copy, we may mention, of this noble edition which Tyndale caused to be presented to Anne Boleyn, out of gratitude for her intervention on behalf of an Antwerp merchant, Richard Herman, who had got himself into trouble by helping in "the setting forth of the New Testament in English." This copy, beautifully ornamented and printed, but not in its original binding, and still faintly bearing on its edges the words, "Anna Angliæ Regina," is now in the British Museum.

It may be not without historical interest to recall the fact that, in the self-same year in which Tyndale made this notable contribution to the cause of translation, there had met in the crypt of St Denis, Montmartre, during the early dawn of the Feast of the Assumption, August 15, 1534, a little company of seven, including Peter Faber, Francis Xavier, and Ignatius Loyola, who took before the high altar that solemn vow of severance from the world, and of devotion to the Church, from

which sprang the Society of Jesus, the sheet-anchor of the Counter-Reformation.

In the spring of the next year, during the month of May 1535, Tyndale was treacherously betrayed to his ever watchful enemies. Enticed out of the house of his friend, Thomas Poyntz, in Antwerp, he was seized and carried off to the prisons of Vilvorde Castle, not far from Brussels. The agent of this plot was one Henry Philips, a rabid Roman Catholic, but who his principals may have been is not known. There is no evidence whatever that the English bishops were concerned with the matter, and it appears certain that neither Henry VIII. nor Cromwell was personally privy to it. At Vilvorde, Tyndale was kept in confinement from May 1535 to October 6, 1536, when he was put to death by strangling and his body burnt at the stake. Foxe gives but one solitary detail of his martyrdom. He cried with a fervent zeal and a loud voice, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes," a cry which was speedily to be answered in the Royal recognition (1537) of the Coverdale and the Matthew Bibles.

In the Archives of the Council of Brabant there has been preserved a pathetic letter, addressed by Tyndale in Latin to the Governor of Vilvorde Castle, in which, after begging that he may be allowed some warmer clothing, he writes as follows:

"I wish also for permission to have a candle in the evening, for it is weary work to sit alone in the dark. But, above all things, I entreat and beseech your clemency to be urgent with the Procureur, that he may kindly suffer me to have my Hebrew Bible,

Grammar, and Dictionary, that I may spend my time with that study."

Apparently his prayer was granted, for it is now considered certain that it is partly to his labours in this foreign dungeon that we owe the translation of that portion of the Old Testament (Joshua to 2 Chronicles inclusive), which he left in the charge of his intimate friend and literary executor, the martyr that was to be, John Rogers.

We have now followed Tyndale through his years of training in Oxford and Cambridge, and have taken note of his natural bent for Bible study, encouraged as it was by the spirit of the New Learning as embodied in men like Colet and Erasmus. We have marked how his experience of the arrogance and ignorance of the official teachers of religion had so disgusted him with the emptiness and unreality of the current theology, as to give birth to his resolution to translate the Bible.* We have accompanied him, full of sanguine anticipations, to the Bishop of London's door, and have overheard the unsympathising words which put an end to all his cherished hopes of publishing his New Testament, by authority, in the capital. We have watched him at work in the house of his heaven-sent friend, Humphrey Munmouth, and have learnt why it was that he became an exile from a country to which he was always most devotedly attached. We have been with him at Cologne and at Worms, while he prepared his first edition for the Press, and have made ourselves

* See Preface to the *Pentateuch: Tyndale's Works*, vol. i., p. 393 (quoted at the head of this chapter).

acquainted with the stirring circumstances under which its despatch to England was successfully effected. We have seen how right he had been in his anticipation of the reception which awaited it from the supporters of the old Church, how Wolsey tried to stamp and burn it out, and how the Bishop of London, in his zeal for its suppression, became an unintentional contributor towards the woodcut illustrations which presently appeared in the English version of the Pentateuch. And lastly, we have seen Tyndale's enemies closing in upon him, shortly after he had completed a thorough revision of his literary labours, and burning the body of the man whose spirit they had been powerless to quell. We may now fitly bring this chapter to a conclusion, first, by placing before our readers some specimens of Tyndale's translation, so that it may be easy for them to realise to how great an extent our present Bible is his personal work, and then by suggesting some explanation of the bitterness of the attack which so highly cultured and so gentle-hearted an opponent as Sir Thomas More thought it his duty to make on a man who was as upright and honest as himself, and who certainly returned him a Roland for his Oliver.

In the selections which follow the spelling has for convenience been modernised. The first extract is from the Book of Numbers, xvi. 28-30:

"And Moses said: Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works, and that I have not done them of mine own mind. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me. But and if the Lord make a new thing, and

the earth open her mouth and swallow them and all that pertain unto them, so that they go down quick into Hell, then ye shall understand that these men have railed upon the Lord."

The next is from St Luke, xv. 11:

"A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, Father give me my part of the goods that to me belongeth. And he divided unto them his substance. And not long after the younger son gathered all that he had together, and took his journey into a far country, and there he wasted his goods with riotous living. . . . Then he remembered himself, and said, How many hired servants of my Father's have bread enough and I die for hunger. I will arise and go to my Father and will say unto him, Father I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, nor am I worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose and came to his father."

The last is from Phil., ii. 5:

"Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, which being in the shape of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Nevertheless he made himself of no reputation, and took on him the shape of a servant, and became like unto men, and was found in his apparel as a man. He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath exalted him, and given him a name above all names, that in the name of Jesus should every knee bow, both of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under earth, and that all tongues should confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord unto the praise of God the father."

These illustrations will, it is hoped, amply suffice to justify the eloquent tribute which Froude* in his *History* has so deservedly paid to the memory of the man whose great services we have endeavoured to depict.

"Of the translation itself," he writes, "though since that time it has been many times revised and altered, we may say that it is sub-

* *History of England*, vol. iii., p. 84.

stantially the Bible with which we are familiar. The peculiar genius—if such a word may be permitted—which breathes through it, the mingled tenderness and majesty, the Saxon simplicity, the preternatural grandeur, unequalled, unapproached, in the attempted improvements of modern scholars—all are here, and bear the impress of the mind of one man, William Tyndale."

Before we leave this portion of our subject, it may interest the reader to have before him specimens of some of Tyndale's peculiar renderings and of his famous "marginal notes." In Gen. xxxix. 2, we have, "And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a lucky fellow." In Matt. vi. 7, "When ye pray, babble not much." In Matt. xv. 27, "The whelps eat of the crumbs." In Rev. i. 10, "I was in the sprete on a Sondaye." The gloss on Exod. xxxii. 35, is, "The Pope's bull slayeth more than Aaran's calf," and on Exod. xxxvi. 6, where the Israelites are told to bring no more offerings for the furnishing of the Sanctuary, "When will the Pope say Hoo! (hold) and forbid to offer for the building of St Peter's? And when will our spirituality say Hoo! and forbid to give them more land and to make more foundations? Never, until they have all."

With regard to the hostility which More and the heads of the Church in England showed to Tyndale's translation, one explanation has already been offered, namely, that it was associated in their minds with Lutheranism, as Lutheranism itself was associated with schism and anarchy ; but this is not the only explanation. The plain fact is that Tyndale and More were irreconcilably at issue on first principles in religious matters, and that the former's published works moved More to an

indignation which knew no bounds. Still in his long controversy * with Tyndale, More expressly says that he himself is not in principle opposed to a vernacular Bible, though he objects to private, incorrect, and unauthorised translations. But such a Bible, in his opinion, should be taken in hand only by men of Catholic minds, and only in times less rife with religious dissension. Moreover, it should have the approval of the ecclesiastical authorities. To which the reply suggests itself, that, if Tyndale had waited for this conjunction of favourable circumstances, he would have had to wait a very long time. The bishops were full of zeal in condemning unauthorised versions, but they did not succeed in producing any superior version of their own. Cranmer, in 1535, planned an episcopal translation, but the scheme was not carried out, and when, at a later date (*i.e.* in 1568), the bishops did at last enter the field, they met with no very conspicuous success. More's real substantial grievance against Tyndale was that he had abandoned the venerable ecclesiastical words, words endeared to Catholics by their old associations, and words, moreover, to which long usage had given a prescriptive sanctity. Instead of "grace," "charity," "confess," "penance," "priest," "church," "salvation," Tyndale's version had given "favour," "love," "acknowledge," "repentance," "elder," "congregation," "health," — a new departure

* The bitterness of both controversialists is excessive even for those days. The usually gentle More writes of Tyndale (in the *Confutation*, pp. 446, 681) as "*a beast*," as one of the "*hell-hounds that the devil hath in his kennel*," and as discharging a "*filthy foam of blasphemies out of his brutish beastly mouth*."

which, however much it might incense More, offered a perfectly fair subject for argument, as there was much to be said on both sides.

Not that the issue turned on a mere matter of words. Behind the change in vocabulary there undeniably lay an implied change in doctrine, just as behind the vestment controversy there lay the deeper controversy respecting the nature of the sacraments. And there was yet one fault more with which Tyndale was charged. Those who had any real acquaintance with the Bible had naturally become familiar with it through the Vulgate. A translation which was based independently on the Hebrew and Greek originals, and which only used the Vulgate as a valuable help, must necessarily contain changes which would jar on minds for whom this Vulgate was practically an inspired book. It was this violent repugnance which found vent in the description of the Vulgate, when printed in juxtaposition with its two ancient sources, as having been "crucified between two thieves." *

If Tyndale could come back to life he would indeed rejoice to see how his work has stood both the fiery trial of theological vindictiveness, and the yet more searching test of time. Surely, when we look at that life as a whole, when we trace through its checkered scenes his unwavering persistency of purpose, his unaffected humility and self-effacement, the indomitable spirit that neither exile, nor disappointment, nor persecution could quench, the strong courage that no plots,

* "Tanquam duos hinc et inde latrones"—say the editors of the *Complutensian Polyglot*—"medium autem Jesum."

no intrigues, no prospect of martyrdom could deflect by one hair's-breadth from the path of duty, his transparent honesty and integrity, the conscientiousness and truthfulness that distinguish him as a scholar and a translator, and his faithfulness even unto death to the task which he had set himself to do, the name of the "Apostle of England" can never be displaced from the proud position which it has long occupied on the roll of our great national benefactors.

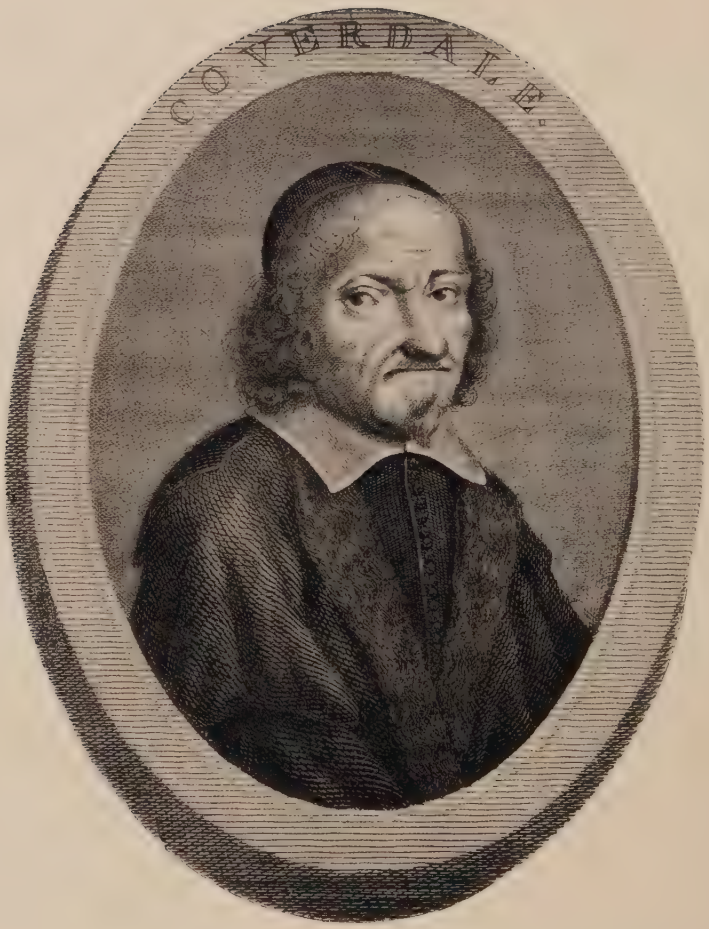
BISHOP COVERDALE.

"Not myself but the truth that in life I have spoken :
Not myself but the seed that in life I have sown :
Shall pass on to ages, all about me forgotten,
Save the words I have written, the deeds I have done."

Αἱ δὲ τεαὶ ζώουσιν ἀηδόνες.

(*Call. Ep.* 47).

Thy notes live still.



MILES COVERDALE.
(*From an Engraving by* THOS. TROTTER.)

[*Face p.* 161.

CHAPTER VI

THE COVERDALE, "MATTHEW," AND GREAT BIBLES

[The *Chronological Table* on pp. xviii.-xix., etc., will be found of service for the purposes of this chapter.]

BETWEEN the year in which Tyndale brought out the first edition of his English New Testament and the year towards the close of which, after some sixteen months of imprisonment in Belgium, he was strangled and burnt at the stake, not far short of fifty thousand copies * of his translation had issued from the Press. And by this time Henry VIII. had been driven, partly by his matrimonial difficulties, and partly also by the tempting prospect of replenishing his purse at the expense of the Church, into the adoption of that high-handed policy of ecclesiastical autocracy with which our readers may be assumed to be more or less familiar.

By a series of statutory enactments the old links which attached England to the Roman jurisdiction were one by one snapped asunder, and a legal path was paved for effecting the royal divorce. In the spiritual no less than in the temporal sphere, the King was declared to

* These Testaments measured for the most part only five or six inches by four, and were therefore comparatively easy to conceal.

be within his dominions supreme, and his marriage with Anne Boleyn made the rupture with the Pope complete and irrevocable. And yet it was but a few years back that Henry had entered the lists as the champion of the Latin Church against Luther, a heretic who, in his opinion, deserved to be burnt alive, and his books with him. While the Diet of Worms was in session Henry had written a treatise in defence of the seven sacraments, which won for him from the Vatican a title of which his vaingloriousness never ceased to be undisguisedly proud, the title, namely, of "Defender of the Faith."

In that book he had dwelt with so much stress on the divine authority of the Pope, that even Sir Thomas More, when invited to look it through, ventured to question the wisdom of elaborating a point of such obvious delicacy and danger. Henry, however, had remained unmoved. "His Highness," says More, "answered me that he would in no wise anything minish of that matter." As yet probably the King entertained no doubt that on it hinged the legality of his marriage.

This literary enterprise would appear to have been of Wolsey's planning. The rapid dissemination in the towns, and in the universities, of Lutheran opinions and literature was filling him with alarm, and nothing would better serve his political purposes than to have his royal master pledged openly before Europe to the anti-Lutheran party. But even Wolsey could not foresee the future. He had calculated without Anne Boleyn. It was in the year 1522 that the young girl

who was destined to prove his ruin came over from France to be a maid of honour in the English Court. At this time the foreign diplomacy of England followed the line indicated by the close relationship between Catherine and Charles V. But after the defeat and capture of King Francis at the battle of Pavia, in 1525, Charles had become so dangerously strong that the old policy of alliance with him was abandoned in favour of a close understanding with France, and Wolsey even looked forward to the eventual replacement of Catherine by a French bride, and for an anti-imperial league between his master and Francis. Accordingly when, in 1527, the imperial forces proceeded to storm Rome, and to make the Pope a prisoner in his own castle of St Angelo, Henry's mind was once for all determined as to what course he must pursue.

It is quite possible that the old feeling of uneasiness about the validity of his marriage, as affecting the succession, had of late years grown upon him. In any case he had now fallen violently in love. He was consequently all the more firmly resolved on getting rid of Catherine, either through Papal sanction or in spite of it, and on marrying—not a French princess but —his new flame.

In 1529 Wolsey, whose failure to bring the Pope round to the King's side in the divorce business involved his downfall, was dismissed by his fickle employer, and Thomas Cromwell began to feel his way to power, and to dream his dream of crushing Charles V. by means of a political and religious league of princes, of which Henry was to be the head.

He pictured to himself the King, enriched with the spoils of a plundered Church, supreme and absolute in power, and with Anne Boleyn for his Queen; while the King's vizier enjoyed a position second only, if second at all, to that of the great dictator.

With regard to Henry's matrimonial problem Cromwell and Cranmer each had their own solution. In Cromwell's view all that Henry had to do was to arrange that Parliament should declare him ecclesiastically supreme. With this sword of "Supremacy" he might safely proceed to cut the knot which the captive Pope was afraid to assist him to untie. Cranmer, who was more of a lawyer than of a theologian, and more of a timid courtier than either, advised that reference should be made to a select body of canonists, in England and abroad, to decide whether the Papacy had ever been in a position to give validity to a union, which, on the assumption that Catherine had been the wife of Henry's brother, contravened the law of God as laid down in Scripture.

Though the Pope of the day could scarcely be expected to stultify himself by deciding that a predecessor of equal infallibility had exceeded his legitimate powers, still if a strong body of expert opinion could be procured in favour of Cranmer's contention, then the marriage with Catherine was no marriage, the Roman dispensation must give way before the plain law of Scripture, and Henry was a free man. "This man," was the King's joyful exclamation when the suggestion was first conveyed to him, "This man has got the right sow by the ear!"

Warham was now dead, and the docile and not too scrupulous Cranmer had become Primate. By his ecclesiastical pronouncement, and by that of the canonists who had been consulted at his suggestion, the marriage with Catherine was held to have been void from the beginning, and Henry and Anne, who had already been privately married, were declared by the Archbishop to be man and wife.

The prospects of an English Bible had thus suddenly become brighter than they had ever been before. In the first place the King's open repudiation of the authority of the Pope left him inferentially pledged to the paramount authority of Scripture. He was not unwilling, moreover, as will presently appear, that his subjects should on certain reasonable conditions possess a translation in their own tongue. He was of this mind because such a translation had all along been contemplated by the New Learning, with whose objects he had from the first been in strong sympathy, and also because he was shrewd enough to see that whatever he could do to encourage the national language would tend in like measure towards the cementing of the national unity. And this was an immense step gained; for, what with the prodigious force of his own personality, and with the centralisation at this time of all real power in the Crown, Henry VIII. might for all practical purposes be considered as identical with England. At any rate the Supreme Head could now, when his humour should permit, be approached on a subject which Cranmer had deeply at heart, namely, the subject of an authorised vernacular version.

By the King's side stood Wolsey's lay successor, a man of great ability and of even greater ambition, trained abroad in the principles of Macchiavelli, but with his fortunes staked on the success of the Reformation, and in that sense therefore a zealous political Protestant—Thomas Cromwell. The young Queen, too, whose brief spell of influence was now at its height, was well disposed towards the cause of the Reformers, while in Cranmer, and in Hugh Latimer the King's chaplain, the promoters of an English Bible had two eager friends, who both of them stood high in the royal favour, and the former of whom had been advanced to the Primacy under circumstances which involved the open recognition of the Scriptures as the final court of appeal.

In order to follow the train of events which under the above conditions led up to the publication of the Coverdale Bible, we must now for a moment retrace our steps.

The reader will not have forgotten that, immediately on its appearance, Tyndale's New Testament, whether with glosses or without them, had at the King's command been denounced, proscribed, and condemned to the flames both by Archbishop Warham, and by Tunstall, Bishop of London. No books could be more formally censured and forbidden. Still, none the less, they continued in secret but very real existence; they had that indescribable attraction which attaches to all forbidden things; they could not be wholly exterminated, and it was impossible that they should be recalled.

In the year 1530, when these volumes had already

been some four years in clandestine circulation, there was published a royal proclamation, covering what was termed a "Bill in English to be published by the preachers," or, in plain language, a direction for the proper tuning of the provincial pulpits. This important proclamation had been preceded by a Synod of learned divines, whose deliberations were largely occupied with the question of a vernacular Bible, and were continued for no less than twelve days. Strangely enough Hugh Latimer was among the members of this conference. By the resolutions which it adopted, but which Latimer subsequently repudiated, certain "great errors and pestilent heresies" were unanimously condemned, such for example as "*the translation of Scripture corrupted by William Tyndale as well in the Old Testament as in the New*," together with a long list of specified enormities in books like "*The Wicked Mammon*," and "*The Obedience of a Christian Man*," both of Tyndale's composition, and in the scurrilous "*Book of Beggars*," by Simon Fish.

The Bill is made to say that "whereas diverse of his subjects think it the King's duty to cause the Bible to be translated into English," and that the King and his prelates "doo wronge in denying or letting of the same," the Conference has decided that "*the having of the hole Scripture in Englisshe is not necessarye to Christen men, and at this tyme not expedient.* The King, however, was to be understood as promising that, when quieter times came back, he would cause the New Testament to "be by learned men faithfully and purely translated" and given to the people.

It is evident, then, that, even before 1530, the demand which was springing up for an English Bible had obtained official recognition. As to the extent and urgency of the demand it is not easy to speak with confidence. On the one hand we have to remember that the entire population can scarcely have exceeded some three million souls; and that the majority of this population were unable to read, and were, moreover, strongly attached to the Catholic services and general mode of life to which they and their fathers had been accustomed from time immemorial. On the other hand English was now the established national language; and the rising tide of Lutheranism, sweeping all that remained of the Lollardy of the fourteenth century into its current, had laid a strong hold upon the middle classes in the town.*

These classes formed a mercantile body which proved itself the more willing to welcome the Reformation, because their commercial interests better harmonised with the active energies of Protestantism than with the inertness and torpor with which the wealth, the luxury, and the conservative policy of the Latin Church had caused its leaders to rest content. At any rate we may feel tolerably confident that printers and publishers, whether here or abroad, would not have embarked their capital in issue after issue of the New Testament, and indeed of the entire Bible, unless they had seen good reason for expecting to make a fair profit out of the venture.

Foxe is not a witness to whom we can ever con-

* Brewer's *Henry VIII.*, ii., 470.

fidently pin our faith, but, after making every allowance for his Protestant bias, it is impossible to doubt that he had satisfied himself that, among a considerable proportion of the community, there was an increasing anxiety to have the Scriptures made accessible. The party of reform preferred English to Latin; they were tired of being kept intellectually in the dark; they were alienated by the moral corruption which had so largely honeycombed the Church and disgusted thoughtful minds. By help of the Bible the conscience of England was finding a new King. In his newly-opened Word men heard him speaking to them face to face. A few years more and they were making answer to him in an English Liturgy.

It is in no way, therefore, surprising that the Convocation over which Cranmer presided in 1534 should have carried a resolution against Gardiner, and petitioned Henry VIII. for an English translation. There is, however, no evidence to show that their petition was ever actually laid before him in person; at any rate, it was repeated in 1536, a fact which is worth recalling as incidental evidence that the Coverdale translation of 1535 was not considered to be altogether satisfactory. This petition would, however, in any case have been placed before Cromwell, and it is Cromwell's shrewd perception of the position at which affairs had arrived which calls for our attention. But we must first introduce our readers to the future Bishop of Exeter, Miles Coverdale, who now makes his appearance on the stage.

Coverdale was born in 1488, and, like Wycliffe before

him, was a Yorkshireman. As a young man he was attached to the monastery of the Augustine Friars at Cambridge, of which Dr Robert Barnes, a prominent reformer, became in due course the Prior. Coverdale was a member of the "Germany" club of Lutherans in the University, and was accustomed to attend their meetings at the "White Horse," near St John's. Of the details of his early years very little is known, but he seems to have been an occasional visitor at Sir Thomas More's house in Chelsea, and either there or elsewhere to have made Cromwell's intimate acquaintance. About the year 1526 he became a secular priest, and when Prior Barnes was summoned to London to make a formal recantation of his heresies, Coverdale accompanied him thither and assisted him in preparing his defence. In or about 1527 we find him writing to Cromwell for assistance in his Biblical studies:—

"Nothing in the world I desire but books; they once had, I do not doubt but Almighty God shall perform that in me which He of His most plentiful favour and grace hath begun."

In 1528 he was at work in the county of Suffolk preaching against the mass, compulsory confession, and the worship of images. Probably, therefore, it may soon have become perilous for him to remain in England.

In 1529 he is said by Foxe to have met Tyndale at Hamburg, and to have helped him in translating the Pentateuch; but the story in its dates and details is by no means free from doubt, besides which, it must be remembered that Coverdale was never at any time much of a Hebrew scholar. At any rate, from 1529 to 1535 we practically lose sight of him, and all that

is known is that for the greater part of that time he was living on the Continent. It is at least a permissible conjecture that, when Cromwell became aware, as Secretary of State, of the turn which things were taking, he determined to be ready with a new Bible. He would have been quick to realise that the chief obstacle to the introduction into England of a licensed Bible lay now in the association of the partial translation already made with the name and with the controversial writings of Tyndale, whom Henry heartily detested, both as being in his opinion a Lutheran, or Zwinglian, heretic, and also as a public denouncer of the divorce. And he may well therefore have placed himself in communication with his old friend Coverdale, encouraging him to be prepared with a complete version of his own, and to get it printed in his own name and published in England, the necessary expenses being guaranteed to him.

Be this how it may, it is certain that rather less than a year before Tyndale's martyrdom, and while he still lay in Vilvorde prison, a Bible, which had been originally promoted by Jacob van Meteren, and had been printed either at Zürich or at Antwerp, stole unobserved into England. This Bible, which was in black letter, and of small folio size, measuring some 12 inches by 8, bore the date of October 4, 1535. It contained an elaborate and somewhat obsequious and cringing dedication to Henry VIII., a dedication which was probably no part of the original book, but was added in the hope of winning a free circulation in England, and was signed by his "humble subjecte and

dayle oratour, Myles Coverdale." For obvious reasons neither the printer's name nor the place of publication was given. The printed sheets reached London, unbound, either in the winter of 1535 or early in 1536, and were there bound up and re-published, by James Nicolson, with certain alterations, including an amended title-page. The original title-page had faithfully described this Bible as having been "translated *out of Douche and Latyn* into Englishe." The amended title-page read more briefly as follows, "faithfully translated into Englyshe."

It has been suggested that Nicolson, the famous Southwark publisher, who had purchased this Coverdale Bible from Van Meteren, may have feared that the allusion in the foreign title-page to German Bibles would do more harm than the allusion to Latin Bibles, including the Vulgate, would do good; and may have hoped that his customers would imagine that they were buying a translation from the Greek and Hebrew. Perhaps the simpler explanation may be that Nicolson was pressed for space, and had in some way to find room for two extra lines to complete a mutilated quotation from Joshua i. 8.

We cannot, however, call him up for cross-examination, and this question must be left undecided. Undecided, too, must rest the equally tantalising problem of why it was that Cromwell did not promptly seize some opportunity of getting Henry's authority for the issue of the first edition of 1535, an issue which, though not actually and in terms sanctioned, was on the other hand never formally prohibited, while the second edition,

scious of any mission at all. He could rely on at least one powerful patron, and was content to accept, with modest diffidence, and even with reluctance, the charge that had been entrusted to him.

The history of the English Bible presents us with many surprises, but with few perhaps so strange as that the right to use a book which is generally recognised as the badge and symbol of religious freedom, should for the first time have been conceded to the English people under circumstances such as those of the "great terror," when men felt "as though a scorpion lay sleeping under every stone." Strangest of all that this privilege should have come from the hands of an autocrat who in ritual and doctrine was from first to last a strong Catholic, and should have come, moreover, with the eager co-operation of a minister of the type of Thomas Cromwell. For Cromwell was an adventurer without a spark of religious principle, and one whose conduct appears to have been consistently regulated by his ambition so to manipulate and manage his master as to secure for himself both fame and fortune by playing Protestantism as the winning political card.

As an introduction to his Bible it will be of interest to our readers to have before them, in Coverdale's own words, a description of the circumstances under which he became a translator; of the view which he took of his work; and of the authorities to whom his version is indebted. The transparent simplicity and sincerity of the writer's character make it impossible to doubt that he is giving us the exact truth of the matter.

In his "Prologue unto the Christian Reader" he expresses himself as follows:—

"Considering how excellent knowledge and learning an interpreter of Scripture ought to have in the tongues, and pondering also my own insufficiency therein, and how weak I am to perform the office of a translator, I was the more loath to meddle with this work.

"Notwithstanding, when I considered how great pity it was that we should want it so long, and called to my remembrance the adversity of them which were not only of ripe knowledge, but would also with all their hearts have performed that they began if they had not had impediment;* considering, I say, that by reason of their adversity it could not so soon have been brought to an end as our most prosperous nation would fain have had it; these and other reasonable causes considered, I was the more bold to take it in hand.

"And to help me herein I have had sundry translations not only in Latin but also of the Dutch interpreters, whom because of their singular gifts and special diligence in the Bible I have been the more glad to follow for the most part, according as I was required.

"But, to say the truth before God, it was neither my labour nor desire to have this work put in my hand; nevertheless it grieved me that other nations should be more plenteously provided for with the Scripture in their mother tongue than we; therefore, when I was instantly required, though I could not do so well as I would, I thought it yet my duty to do my best and that with a good will. . . . .

". . . . It was never better with the congregation of God than when every church almost had the Bible of a sundry translation. . . . *Sure I am that there cometh more knowledge and understanding of the Scripture by sundry translations than by all the glosses of our sophistical doctors.* Be not thou offended, therefore, good reader, though one call a *scribe* that another calleth a *lawyer;* or *elders* that another calleth *father and mother;* or *repentance* that another calleth *penance* or *amendment.* For if thou be not deceived by men's traditions, thou shalt find no more

* The reference is of course to Tyndale, who was in prison, but who might possibly obtain his release.

diversity between these terms than between fourpence and a groat. And this manner have I used, calling it in some place *penance* that in another I call repentance . . . . that the adversaries of the truth may see how that we abhor not this word *penance*, as they untruly report of us."

And in his Dedication he writes with equal candour and directness:

"I have with a clear conscience purely and faithfully translated out of *five sundry interpreters*."

Who these interpreters were will appear presently, but in the meantime let us learn something of Coverdale's style by taking two specimens of his version selected from familiar passages in the prophetical books.

"Be of good cheer my people, be of good cheer (saith your God). Comfort Jerusalem and tell her that her travail is at an ende, that her offence is pardoned, that she hath received of the Lord's hand sufficient correction for all her sinnes."

Isaiah xl. 1.

"Behold I will send my messenger which shall prepare the way before me, and the Lorde whom ye would have shall soon come to his temple, and the messenger of the Covenant whom ye longe for. Beholde he cometh saithe the Lorde of hostes. But who may abide the daye of his coming, who shall be able to endure when he appeareth? For he is like a goldsmith's fire and like a washer's soap. He shall set him down to try and to cleanse the silver; he shall purge the children of Levi, and purify them like as gold and silver."

Malachi iii. 1, 2, 3.

Scholars who have been at the pains of collating this Bible with the Latin and German versions to which Coverdale would have access, are generally agreed in specifying his "five sundry interpreters" to have been as follows:—

1. The Swiss-German (or Zürich) Bible, by Zwingli and Leo Juda, which was completed in 1529, and which is characterised rather by smoothness, grace, and rhythmic flow of phrase, than by any very rigorous fidelity to the original.

2. Luther's German Bible.

3. The Vulgate.

4. The Latin Bible of 1528 by Pagninus, a Dominican monk, a pupil of Savonarola, and a teacher of Oriental literature at Rome under Leo X.

5. Either Tyndale's translation, or else some additional Latin, or perhaps German, version.

In that part of the Old Testament which Coverdale was the first to render into English, namely, the historical, poetical, and prophetical books, he closely follows the above-named Zürich Bible in preference to any other interpreter. In the New Testament his two chief guides are Tyndale's latest * revision and Luther. In the Apocrypha, where like the Zürich translators he leaves out the "Prayer of Manasses," he allows himself a wider range than in any other part of his work, and displays throughout his rendering a relatively stronger individuality.

The influence of Coverdale upon the Authorised Version, whether exerted through his own or through Matthew's Bible (of which latter compilation his contribution makes up about one-third), or, lastly, through the Great Bible—in whose successive editions we find him revising and re-revising both his own work and that of Tyndale—has been great and enduring.

* Known as the "G. H." revision of 1534-5.

Not that we can lay our hand on many passages of any considerable length in which his renderings have remained up till now untouched. It is rather that, for page after page, in some subtle way, in a cadence here, and a happy rendering there, the spirit and genius of this gifted literary artist make themselves continuously felt. He was of a delicate and susceptible temperament, endowed in an exceptional degree with the feeling for rhythm, and with an instinct for whatever is tender and beautiful in language. His relation to other translators may be said somewhat to resemble that in which, to take an illustration from the domain of music, Spohr stands to his brother composers. It is to the melodiousness of his phrasing, to his mastery over what may be described as the literary semi-tone, to his innumerable dexterities and felicitous turns of expression, that we owe more probably than we most of us recognise of that strangely moving influence which seems ever to be welling up from the perennial springs of the English Bible, and from the Prayer Book version of the Psalms.

No two men could well be more different than Coverdale and Tyndale. It is only necessary to glance at their respective portraits, in the prints which have come down to our times, in order to appreciate the moral and intellectual contrast which we can see reflected in their physical features. The character of the one stands out as cast in a heroic mould, full of originality and creative power, massive, rugged, self-reliant, afraid of no one, seeking no one's patronage. That of the other is of a man made to follow, but not

to lead, gentle and sympathetic in nature, eager to be of service to the cause of the Bible, but with nothing of the heroic or creative about him, modest, retiring, self-depreciating, leaning on his patrons almost even to the point of obsequiousness, diffident and timorous. Yet each of them is the literary complement of the other, and most assuredly our Bible could spare neither the strong virility and scholarship of Tyndale, nor the gentle tenderness and resourcefulness of Coverdale.

If our limits permitted we might quote sentence after sentence from the Authorised Version, and more especially from its Psalter, as well as from Isaiah, the golden coinage of which is from the Coverdale mint, but the following must suffice :—

"Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is nigh."

"My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever."

"Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish but thou shalt endure ; they all shall wax old, as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

And if Coverdale is thus pre-eminent in the qualities of melody, distinction, and beauty, he has also his own occasional quaintnesses of expression.

"Then God opened a gome tooth in the cheke bone so the water went out."—Judges xv. 19.

"Make me a syppynge or two."—2 Samuel xiii. 6.

"Shott the King of Israel between the mawe and the lunges."—1 Kings xxii. 34.

"No one faynte noe feble among them, no not a slogish nor slepery parsone."—Isaiah v. 27.

We must now turn our attention to a Bible which followed close upon the heels of the version from which we have quoted, and which was destined to fulfil Coverdale's modest hope that his own work might before long be displaced by that of some other labourer in the same field. The compiler of this new Bible was John Rogers. Published on grounds of prudence under an assumed name, and purporting to be "Matthew's" Bible, it was the edition which enjoyed the most brisk circulation in the short reign of Edward VI.

John Rogers took his B.A. degree at Cambridge in 1525. About nine or ten years later he left England to take up the post of chaplain to the Merchant Adventurers of the "English House" in Antwerp in which Tyndale was then living, and with which Cromwell was for some years in close relation. There a close friendship sprang up between him and Tyndale, a friendship which, if Foxe is correct, was extended also to Miles Coverdale. Prominent among the reformers during the brief life of Edward VI., Rogers was the first to fall a victim to the Marian persecutions, and was burned at Smithfield in 1555.

Before Tyndale was martyred he had appointed Rogers to be his literary executor, and had committed to his care the unfinished MS. of his translation of the Old Testament from the Book of Joshua to 2 Chronicles inclusive. Rogers himself, it is supposed, was anxious that, in addition to the Coverdale Bible, which, as we have seen, was only a secondary version, there should be produced a Bible in which a reader should find incorporated all the original, but uncom-

pleted, work which had been done by the dear friend whom he had just lost. But Tyndale, as we have seen, had left a large portion of the Old Testament untranslated; and the literary gap which was thus occasioned could most conveniently be filled up in the new Bible by making use therein of some part of the translation with which Coverdale had recently been occupied.

Future revisers would thus, through the joint versions of Tyndale and Coverdale, have the best available basis on which to work. But in carrying out this idea Rogers was confronted with two preliminary obstacles which had in some way to be surmounted. One difficulty was that of funds. The other was that no publisher would risk his capital in a book with the fatal name of William Tyndale upon the title-page. Who the mysterious "Matthew" may have been is not known. Probably he may have been a merchant who was willing to place sufficient capital at Roger's disposal to start the press-work, and who also allowed his name to be used as a convenient blind. The printing seems to have been begun at Antwerp, where Rogers was living at the time, and to have gone on successfully as far as the Book of Isaiah, when, as no more money was forthcoming, the enterprise came temporarily to a deadlock.

At this juncture two London publishers came to the rescue; Richard Grafton, a member of the Grocers' Company, and Edward Whitchurch, a fellow-merchant, the former of whom is known to have staked a large sum in the undertaking. To print the Bible in English

was now evidently considered to be a fair commercial speculation.

In this respect the "Matthew" Bible tells its own tale. The Book of Isaiah has a blank leaf in front of it, and the pagination begins afresh from there. At that point, moreover, we find a second title, in red and black letters, "The Prophetes in Englysh"; and on the upper corners of the reverse-page are the initials R. G., and on the lower corners E. W. At the end of Malachi are the letters W. T. in large ornamented capitals, standing of course for William Tyndale.

The Bible is of folio size, but rather larger than the Coverdale edition, which, as has been said above, measures 12 inches by 8. It is printed in black letter, and is dedicated to "The moost noble and gracyous Prynce Kyng Henry the Eyght," the dedication being signed by "Thomas Matthew." There is an "Exhortation to study of Scripture" signed J. R.; some twenty pages or more of preliminary matter, such as a calendar, almanac, etc.; and a really valuable concordance of texts on "Principal Matters," strongly Protestant in its composition, which Rogers has apparently taken directly from the French Bible of Olivetan. From that Bible also is derived his introduction to the Apocrypha, and his translation of the brief "Prayer of Manasses," a book which, as we saw, Coverdale had omitted altogether. Curiously enough, the translation of the prophecy of Jonah is not taken from Tyndale's version but from Coverdale's. Coverdale, however, had based his work on Tyndale, while Tyndale's "Jonah" had

become so scarce that Rogers was probably unable to lay his hand on a copy. Perhaps its lengthy "Prologue" made it as popular among the reformers (who relished the sauce quite as much as the meat) as it would be obnoxious to the ecclesiastical authorities. At any rate Tyndale's own contribution exceeds that of the prophet in the proportion of nearly eight pages to one.

No utilisation can be traced in this Bible of the "Sarum Epistles" from the Old Testament, to which reference was made when describing Tyndale's labours as a translator. There are Prologues to almost all the Books, including the notorious Prologue to the Epistle to the Romans, taken from Tyndale's New Testament; and there are notes at the end of each chapter, some few of which are highly controversial, and even for those hard-hitting days somewhat offensive, though the majority of them are either purely explanatory or practical.

The permanent interest of the "Matthew" Bible lies in the fact that it forms the real basis of all later revisions, and that through the line of the Great Bible, and of the Bishops' Bible, our Authorised Version is descended from it as from a direct ancestor.

Such, then, is the history of Rogers' composite work. His Bible reached England about the end of July 1537, and in one of a series of letters, all of which have been preserved, Cranmer, who seems almost to have been expecting it, at once notified its arrival to Cromwell. He informs the Vicegerent that *so far as he had read* (which, by the way, could not have been very far), he

thought it the best translation he had yet seen, and begs that Henry might be persuaded to license its circulation "until such time that we bishops shall set forth a better, *which I think will not be till a day after doomsday*."

It would indeed be interesting to know exactly what passed in the royal audience chamber, and how it was that Cromwell contrived, within the short space of a week or ten days, to obtain the King's authorisation. We should be curious, too, to learn whether, finding his royal master in a favourable mood, Cromwell seized the opportunity of getting its forerunner, the Coverdale Bible, licensed at the same time. Except for Fulke's statement that Matthew's edition was the first "authorised" English Bible, there is nothing to indicate that it was any earlier in circulation than the Coverdale Edition of 1537, which was "set forth with the King's most gracious license."

The point of chronological priority, however, is one of no practical importance. What most excites our astonishment is that a transaction which, if regard be had to Henry's varying moods, and to the fury of his anger when once aroused, must surely have risked the heads of all concerned, should, as regards its details, have left no trace whatever in the records of the time.

For here was a Bible two-thirds of which were actually the arch-heretic's own work. Tyndale's very initials stood printed in conspicuous capitals at the end of the Old Testament. The most ultra-Protestant of all his Prologues, the introduction to the Epistle to the

Romans, was given in full. Some, though not many, of the added notes were as ecclesiastically offensive as anything which even the exile himself, whose pen did not lack pungency, had ever written.

Grafton, who was a shrewd man of business, and who had ventured some six or seven thousand pounds of our money in the book, must himself have known quite well what was inside it. Yet we find him handing it to Cranmer with child-like confidence, and the Primate contenting himself with what could only have been the most cursory glance at the contents, and then warmly recommending it to Cromwell for Henry's approval. Cromwell on his side submits it, without delay or hesitation, to the Supreme Head, just as if it had been the most innocent book in the world.

It is impossible not to feel somewhat at a loss as to what the reasons could have been which decided "The Defender of the Faith" to license this Bible off hand. Unfortunately we have no sufficient materials to enable us to solve the problem. It is as difficult to suppose that Cromwell took the chance that the King would not think it necessary to look closely into it, as it is to assume that he had made practically certain beforehand that he would be running no real risk in thus placing his head within the lion's jaws. Henry was certainly not a man to be trifled with, nor was he a person lacking either in discernment or in decision. He was actuated all along by the instinctive feeling that the nation, as a whole, was with him in upholding both its internal religious unity, and its external ecclesiastical independence. He believed the Lutherans to be an obstacle to unity, and

accordingly, as in Lambert's case, he burnt them as heretics. The Papalists endangered England's independence, and he therefore cut off their heads as traitors to the supremacy. If, when Cromwell asked him to license the "Matthew" Bible, he had chanced to open it at Tyndale's "*Prologue to the Epistle to the Romans*," or if the odour of some of the unorthodox notes had reached the royal nostrils, it would surely have been a stirring day both for that venturesome vizier and for all who stood behind him.

"All's well," the proverb says, "that ends well," and whatever the considerations which on this eventful occasion may have weighed with Henry, Cromwell's tactful courage had at any rate its due reward. Within twelve months of the martyrdom of its author at Vilvorde, the translation which "either with glosses or without" had been denounced, abused, and burnt at St Paul's, was now, under its assumed name, formally approved by the King's grace, and published, together with Coverdale's Bible, under the shelter of a royal proclamation and license.

Perhaps the simplest explanation of what seems to us now so puzzling is that Henry, who at this period may be held to have reached the high-water mark of such sympathy as he ever came to feel with the reformers, altogether failed to realise the vastness of the issues with which his ecclesiastical policy was confronting the world.* So far was he from treating the question of an English Bible with any real religious earnestness that he appears to have viewed it almost exclusively in its bearing on

* Green's *History of the English People* (1877), ii., pp. 218-19.

problems of state, and in the light therefore of a political shuttle-cock. Even within a year or so of his death, and in his last address to Parliament, he shows this same incapacity of appreciation, and speaks as if the breaking up of Christendom under his very eyes was nothing but a quarrel, of "*opinions and of names devised for the continuance of the same*," such as Lutheran, and Papist, and Anabaptist; a matter indeed for regret, but one which a little charity and a little good sense could easily adjust. As with the war of the bees in Virgil's Georgics, so was it in the King's sight with the angry hives of religious combatants:

> "Hi motus animorum, atque haec certamina tanta,
> Pulveris exigui jactu compressa quiescunt."
>
> *Geor.* iv. 85.

> "Yet all these dreadful deeds, this deadly fray,
> A cast of scattered dust will soon allay."
>
> —DRYDEN.

Whether, had we lived in his reign, we should have been more far-sighted than this Tudor of the Tudors who will dare to say? To be wise after the event is so easy. It was with a light heart that Henry raised the sluices, but the torrent that presently ran through them proved to be as much beyond his control as it is at this very hour beyond our own.

We come now to one of the best known of our English versions, namely, the Great Bible, or "Bible of the largest volume," and with a sketch of this edition we shall bring the present chapter to an end.

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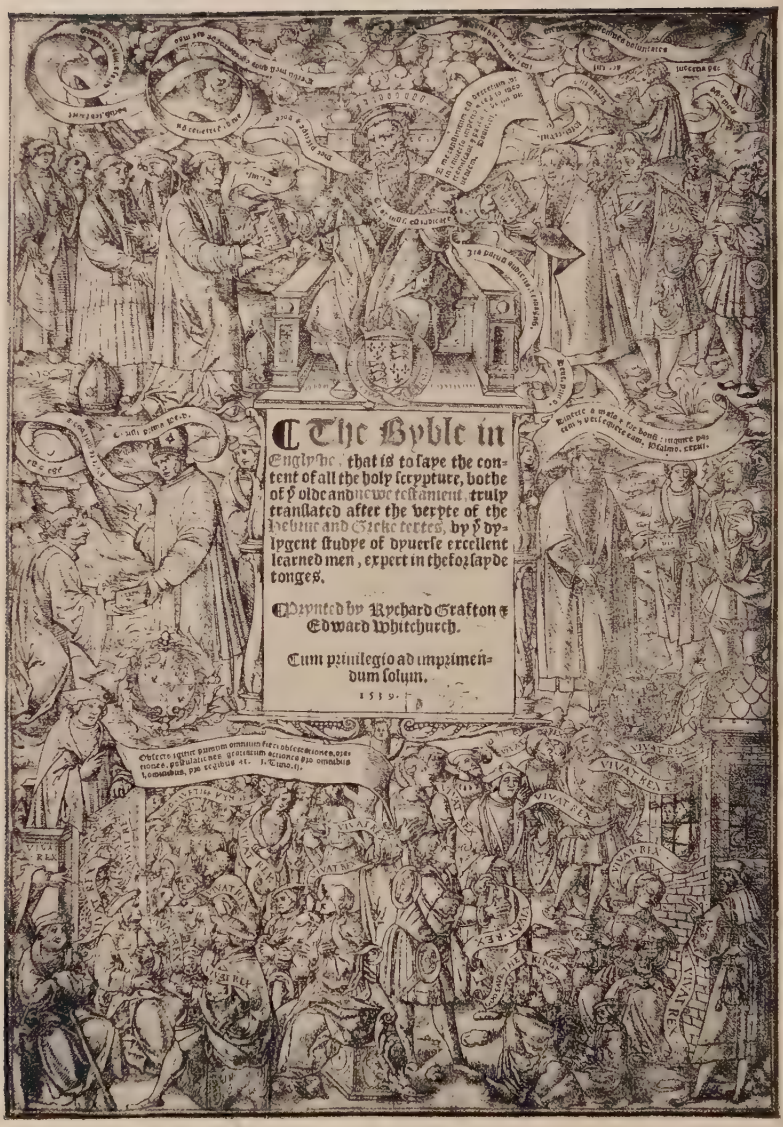
then Bishop-elect of Hereford, and Ambassador at Paris. As Ambassador he had the invaluable privilege of travelling without having his luggage overhauled. Accordingly a little before Christmas, when the new Bible was far advanced, Coverdale, in order to be on the safe side, packed off his finished sheets from Paris through Bonner to Cromwell. Scarcely had he done so, when on the 17th December an order of confiscation from the Inquisitor General burst like a bomb-shell upon the little company, and Regnault was promptly cited. The officer who had been charged with the prompt destruction of the printed leaves was most probably bribed to contravene his orders. "Four great dry vats" of printed matter were sold as waste paper to a haberdasher, and, having been re-sold by him to Cromwell's agents, were sent over to London, whither Grafton and Coverdale had already fled. Cromwell then bought up the type and the presses from Regnault, and had them conveyed, together with Regnault's staff of compositors, across the Channel, and in April 1539 the first edition of this magnificent specimen of the art of printing was ready for publication.

The Great Bible is a large folio, in black letter, without notes, and without any dedication. Its title-page reads as follows: "The Byble in Englyshe, that is to saye the content of all the holy scripture, bothe of the old and newe testament, truly translated after the veryte of the Hebrue and Greke textes by the dylygent studye of dyuerse excellent learned men, expert in the forsayde tongues. Prynted by Rychard Grafton & Edward Whitchurch. *Cum privilegio ad*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learned men, expert in the forsayde
tonges.
¶ Prynted by Rychard Grafton &
Edward Whitchurch.
Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum.
1539.
VIVAT REX

HOLBEIN ENGRAVING. [*Face p.* 191.

imprimendum solum, 1539." It at once took rank as the "authorised version" of its time.

Who may have been intended by the "diverse learned men" to whom the title refers cannot now be ascertained. If the reference had been not to the translators of various versions, but to living scholars working under the supervision of Coverdale, it is reasonable to suppose that some allusion to them would be found in his letters. But such is not the case.

The compulsory omission of all notes was a sore trouble to the translator. His annotations were ready, and, as the brief preface tells us, they had even been placed before "the King's most honourable Council for oversight and correction." Not only so, but there was an elaborate apparatus of "pointing hands," etc., specially designed to direct attention to them, and Coverdale had even offered to submit them all for Bishop Bonner's examination before publication. But annotations and glosses were in this time in very bad repute; Henry himself had a horror of them, and "the most honourable Council" would have nothing to say to them; so that the Great Bible had to be printed with Coverdale's "hands" pointing as it were *in vacuo*, and bearing their silent and sorrowful witness to his disappointed hopes, and to a scheme which was destined never to be carried out.

One great feature of this Bible is the frontispiece, which is said to have been designed for it by Hans Holbein, to which we shall return again.* It is a large

* See Froude's *History*, vol. ii., p. 82, where, however, the Holbein engraving is referred in error to the Coverdale Bible.

engraving, measuring about fourteen inches by nine, and throws a remarkably clear light on the absolute authority which The Throne was conceived to wield.

In the upper part The Saviour is represented as looking down on the King from the clouds. Two Latin scrolls are coming from his lips, the one from Isaiah lv. 11, the other from Acts xiii. 22. This latter is directed towards Henry, who in the upper right hand corner of the engraving is kneeling with his crown laid on the ground, and making answer, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet." Immediately below the figure of Christ the King is shown sitting on his throne with the royal arms and motto underneath it. This is the dominant subject of the picture. Henry is seen handing the Bible on the one side to Cranmer, who is without his mitre, and behind whom stand the clergy, and on the other side to Cromwell, also bare-headed, behind whom stand the nobles. Somewhat lower down the figures of Cranmer and Cromwell are repeated, and we see them handing the scriptures to the bishops and laity. In the lower part of the engraving there appears a preacher in a pulpit addressing an enthusiastic congregation, some of whom are shouting "*Vivat Rex!*" and some "God save the Kynge!" In the corner we see a group of political prisoners looking on through their window bars, apparently in grim disgust at the loyalty of the crowd.

The Great Bible is often spoken of as "Cranmer's Bible," but this title is a misnomer. The promoter of the revision was Cromwell; the editor was Coverdale;

the printers were Regnault, the famous French typographist, and Grafton; and with the edition of 1539 Cranmer had personally little or nothing to do.

The misnomer has very naturally grown out of the fact that the Primate composed an elaborate preface, in excellent English of the Tudor type, which was printed in 1540 as an introduction to the second edition, and which was reproduced in all the five later editions. With regard to this preface, which though very practical is somewhat lengthy, it is curious that on the same day (November 14, 1539) on which the Archbishop wrote to Cromwell to ask whether he had obtained Henry's approval of it, Cromwell had received from the King a patent, "*per ipsum regem*," "by the authority of the King himself" (ignoring Parliament, Council, and Convocation alike), which conferred on the ecclesiastical Vicegerent direct and absolute authority to control the licensing of English Bibles for the next five years.

Not anticipating the interruption which was caused by the volcanic zeal of the Inquisition, Cromwell had prepared the way for the Great Bible by an injunction framed as early as 1536, but not issued until September 1538, in virtue of which all clergy were ordered to provide before a specified day "one boke of the whole Bible, *in the largest volume*, in Englyshe, sett up in summe convenyent place within the churche that ye have cure of, whereat your parishioners may most commodiously resort to the same and rede yt." This injunction had all the authority of a royal proclamation, and thus, within thirteen years of the burning of Tyndale's New

Testaments at St Paul's, the battle of the English Bible had been finally won. First forbidden; then silently tolerated; and next licensed, it was now commanded by the King's Highness to be set up for the benefit of each one of the eleven thousand parishes in the land. In the rapidly growing spirit of the age the newly-opened Scriptures found an ally far too powerful for the forces of reaction.

The impression which we drive from the Holbein engraving is confirmed by Strype* in his life of Cranmer.

"It was wonderful," we there read, "to see with what joy this book of God was received, not only among the learned sort, but generally, all England over, among all the vulgar and common people, and with what greediness God's Word was read. Everybody that could bought the book, or busily read it, or got others to read it to them."

Collier, the ecclesiastical historian, prints a paper found in the public archives and relating to the year 1539, which points to the effect of the open Bible on literary tastes. "Englishmen have now in hand, in every church and place, the Holy Bible in their mother tongue, *instead of the old fabulous and fantastical books of the Table Round, Lancelot du Lake, Bevis of Hampton, Guy of Warwick, etc.*, and such other, whose impure

* Strype is invaluable as a collector of historical materials, but the power of sifting evidence is not one of his gifts, and he borrows freely from Foxe. It is unfortunate, for the interests of history, that our ideas of what happened at the Reformation should have come to us through such highly prejudiced sources as Foxe and Bale, zealots in whose eyes Protestantism could apparently do no wrong and speak no guile.

filth and vain fabulosity the light of God has abolished utterly." *

But the picture has its reverse side. Henry had accompanied his concession with a condition which many of his humbler subjects were by far too much excited, and far too unscrupulous, to observe. He had directed every preacher to charge his congregation to use the new translation "humbly and reverently," "not having thereof any open reasoning in your taverns or alehouses," but reading it "quietly and charitably every of you to the edifying of himself, his wife and family." (Strype's *Cranmer*, ii., 735.)

Bonner's experience in old St Paul's was but too probably the experience of many another Cathedral as well. The bishop had bought six copies of this splendid folio, had located them so as to be readily accessible to the public, and had hung up over each copy directions as to the orderly use of the book, drawn up in the same spirit as the King's. The new Protestantism, however, was disorderly in the extreme, and there was in consequence a wanton and reckless disregard of restrictions whose very reasonable aim it was to secure decency and reverence in the use of the open Bible.

The Reformation spirit was too strong for men who had no mental balance. They were drunk with the new wine, and liberty degenerated with them into disreputable and offensive license. The preacher in the pulpit often found his exhortations completely drowned in a tumult of voices shouting verses of the Bible out aloud in

* *Ecclesiastical History*, ix., 162. London, 1852.

various parts of the church, and occasionally adding to them certain improvised expositions. So great was the resulting chaos that the bishop was obliged to threaten the removal of the books, unless the rules laid down concerning their use were better observed.

The Great Bible went through no less than seven editions in about two years, and between the issue of the third and fourth of these editions, Cromwell, to whose enterprise we saw this version to have been originally due, had been abandoned by his master to the vindictiveness of his countless enemies, and sent savagely to the block. His heraldic arms, which figure in the first three editions, are accordingly absent from the last four. The specially illuminated copy on vellum which was prepared in his personal honour, and duly presented to him in 1539, is among the chief treasures of the library of St John's College, Cambridge.

This Bible "of largest volume" had a reign of some thirty years, and remains up to this very day the only formally "authorised" English version. It embodies Coverdale's maturest work as a revising editor. Our Prayer-Book, in whose services the extracts from Scripture are for the most part derived from King James's Bible, has a note announcing that it takes its Psalter from this Bible; but the offertory sentences in the Communion Service, and the "Comfortable words," to which a like derivation has sometimes been ascribed, are not borrowed *verbatim* from any known version, but are, in all probability, Cranmer's own personal work. The fourth edition of the Great Bible, issued in November 1540, recites in its title that it has been

"oversene and perused by the ryghte reverende fathers in God, Cuthbert bisshop of Duresme, and Nicolar bisshop of Rochester."

This episcopal authorisation was by the King's command. The reason which rendered it expedient was, that the Great Bible being Cromwell's child, the taint of his disgrace, and the suspicion of heresy under which he had fallen, had affected its reputation as an orthodox version. This Cuthbert of Duresme was no other than the Cuthbert Tunstall who had refused the hospitality of his palace to Tyndale, and who had subsequently burnt the book on which, under its changed garb, he now pronounced his official and literary blessing.

It has not been thought necessary to include the Taverner Bible of 1539 in this historical sketch, for it is little more than the revision by a private scholar of "Matthew's" edition, and has not exerted any influence upon the literary succession. Nevertheless some of Taverner's happiest renderings yet survive in our current version, such for example as "parable" for "similitude"; "the love of many shall wax cold"; "the Israel of God."

It is from the setting up of the Great Bible in parish churches that the ever-widening influence of the Gospel teaching on English life may be said both officially and practically to date.*

Hard upon the latest issue of this revision in 1541 there followed the so-called Catholic reaction which marked the last years of Henry's life, and the temporary

* Green's *History*., iii., pp. 10-13.

ascendency of Bishop Gardiner. The English Bible was not suppressed, for such a thing was no longer possible; but, so far as legal enactments could influence practice, the liberty of reading it was sensibly restricted in 1543, and no fresh translation of the Holy Scriptures was made until the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In the period that intervened Rogers and Cranmer both suffered martyrdom at the stake, and even Coverdale's life was with difficulty saved by his flight into foreign climes.

THE GENEVAN, BISHOPS', AND DOUAI BIBLES

"We must not imagine that in the primitive Church, either every one that understood the learned tongues, might without reprehension, read, reason, dispute, turn and toss the Scriptures ; or that our forefathers suffered every schoolmaster, scholar, or grammarian that had a little Greek or Latin, straight to take in hand the holy Testament : or that the translated Bibles were in the hands of every husbandman, artificer, prentice, boys, girls, mistress, maid, man : that they were sung, played, alleged, of every tinker, taverner, rimer, minstrel : that they were for table-talk, for ale-benches, for boats and barges, and for every profane person and company."

"The poor ploughman could then, in labouring the ground, sing the hymns and psalms either in known or unknown languages, as they heard them in the holy Church, though they could neither read nor know the sense, meaning and mysteries of the same. . . . Then the Virgins did meditate upon the places and examples of chastity, modesty, and demureness : the married on conjugal faith and continency : the parents how to bring up their children in the faith and fear of God : the prince how to rule : the subject how to obey : the priest how to teach : the people how to learn. Then the scholar taught not his master, the sheep controlled not the pastor, the young student set not the doctor to school, nor reproved their fathers of error and ignorance."

(*Preface to the Rheims New Testament.*)

CHAPTER VII

THE GENEVAN, BISHOPS', AND DOUAI BIBLES

As was seen in the last chapter the position of the Great Bible, fortified as it had come to be by episcopal supervision and approval, proved to be but little affected by the sudden downfall of Cromwell, to whose initiative it was due.

But with Cromwell fell his Protestant policy, and the period of reaction which dates from his death has caused the year 1540 to be something of a landmark in the history of our subject.

We propose, therefore, briefly to recall the circumstances under which the career of the all-powerful minister to whom, as Henry's Vicegerent, we owe our ecclesiastical independence, was brought with such tragic abruptness to an end.

Let us revert then for a moment to the Holbein engraving, to which reference has already been made as forming the frontispiece of the Great Bible. It is impossible to mistake its significance.

If it means anything it means that, in the eyes of those around him, Henry VIII. was himself the English Reformation. For he is the centre and the soul of the

picture. Not Parliament, not Convocation, not the Council, neither Cromwell himself nor Cranmer, but the King's Grace it is, that, under the guidance of Providence, presents the Bible to Cranmer and Cromwell, as representing respectively the clergy and laity of his realm. And this Bible was then, and is now, and always will be, the sheet-anchor of English Protestantism.

To express our meaning in other words, the Reformation of Cromwell's day, for the results of which we may be thankful without thinking too highly of its methods, was from above, not from below; royal not popular; political not doctrinal; gradual not revolutionary. With all Henry's faults, and they were many and great, we at least owe to him this, that England managed to weather a tremendous crisis in her history without any Thirty Years War. He packed Parliament; he terrorised Convocation; he made judges and juries accomplices in his unrighteous deeds; but he neither ignored nor suppressed any one of these bodies, and by thus draping his despotic powers in the old constitutional forms, he unconsciously safeguarded, until the coming of more settled days, the liberties of the land.

It is true that we can point to no individual reformer in England who stands out so prominently as either Luther, or Zwingli, or Calvin; but neither can the Continent point to any actor in the drama who surpasses Henry in his prodigious force of character, and in his capacity for dealing vigorously with great issues. The times called for a strong personality, and

not even his enemies will venture to deny that the old lion was at least possessed of immense strength. But we must proceed with our more immediate subject.

Henry was politically a Protestant, because he could not avoid it. So long as he was occupied in the final emancipation of his country from the Roman jurisdiction; In sweeping into the State coffers the spoils of those monasteries, and abbeys, and chantries, in which there lay enshrined the innermost spirit of the old society; in dragooning the catholic clergy; and in keeping a watchful eye on Charles V., who might at any time be invading England in order to avenge the injuries of the Papacy, it was plainly inevitable that he should wear the colours of a party for whose religious doctrines he all along entertained an honest personal dislike. If it be permissible to parody a well-known saying, we might fairly put into his mouth the words, "*Amica Ecclesia, sed magis amicus rex.*"

It was, indeed, no light matter for him that his quarrel with the head of the Catholic Church involved the risk of war either with the champion of Catholicism, the most powerful monarch of the age, or else with Francis, or possibly with both. The jealous rivalry between France and Spain might make it practicable for diplomacy to play the one off against the other, but it still remained desirable to make temporary use of the Lutheran Princes as a make-weight in the political balance.

For a while, therefore, Cromwell was given a free hand, and for a while, too, and in so far forth as appeal

could be made to the Scriptures as rebutting the claims of Rome to supreme ecclesiastical jurisdiction, the cause of the English Bible was safe under the royal ægis. But in the nature of things a reaction was inevitable. Despotic as was the Tudor rule, it may be questioned whether at any time in our annals more anxious pains have been taken by those in power to keep in touch with national feeling, and to govern in accordance with the ascertained wishes and interests of the people at large. Accordingly, when in 1536 there broke out that sudden insurrection in the North, which is known to history as the *Pilgrimage of Grace*—a movement which, for brevity's sake, may be described as a revolt against the aims and methods of Cromwell—the King received a severe shock. So unmistakable an ebullition of popular feeling served to open his eyes and to give him pause.

Already the Protestants among his subjects had sorely vexed and irritated him by their disorderly use or abuse of the Great Bible, the sacred words of which, as he bitterly complained, "*were disputed, rimed, sung, and jangled in every alehouse.*" They had incensed him still further by their ribald plays and ballads, in mockery of the old religion, and by the gross irreverence and profanity with which, in the intoxication of their religious zeal, they treated the sacraments and venerable customs of the Church. At a glance Henry took in the position. Whatever the towns might be thinking, the country conservatives were becoming seriously disaffected. It was one thing for them to be well quit of an Italian over-lord, but a wholly

different thing to see friendly monks and abbots forcibly dispossessed and insulted; shrines and images pulled down; pilgrimages and holy-days suppressed; sacred and beautiful buildings wrecked; and all the old religious life which the country folk still loved and cherished, torn brutally up by the roots.

The ecclesiastical Vicegerent must be made the scapegoat. Cromwell had been travelling too fast. He was now seriously endangering the popularity which was to Henry as the very breath of his life. He had drawn the orthodox "Defender of the Faith" into the semblance of too close an alliance with the detested continental reformers. He was alienating the loyal Catholic population, and imperilling the authority of the King-Pope over his divided religious household.

There must be a change. The foreign Lutherans were no longer an essential factor in the political situation, and they might go their own way. The danger which had been imminent, so long as Catherine remained alive to remind Charles V. of the insult that had been levelled both at his own family and at the cause of Catholicism, was now passed. Doubtless Cranmer was a useful tool, but he was not the only able ecclesiastic in the Council. There was his equally zealous counterweight, Stephen Gardiner. If the new Protestantism could not behave itself, and if it was dissatisfied with the comparatively Lutheran tone of the Confession of the "Ten Articles," it must be made to hear the crack of the Tudor whip in the Confession of the "Six Articles" with all its terrible sanctions. And as for

Cromwell he was no longer needed. His work was done. He had replenished the royal exchequer with the proceeds of the plundered monasteries, and had eased matters for Henry's political indolence by taking the whole burden of administration on his shoulders. His foreign diplomacy was now said to be open to grave suspicion. He had begun to forget who was the real master of the house. Very possibly, too, he was a heretic. In any case he was only in the way. The ecclesiastical vessel required trimming, and it could best be trimmed by pitching him overboard. Doubtless his many enemies were watching eagerly for the withdrawal of the royal favour, and for an opportunity of vengeance. But loyalty to old and faithful servants was never Henry's strong point. When he had finished with them the hungry sharks were welcome to them. They could be replaced, or if they could not, he was ready enough to govern without any ministers at all.

Thus, then, it happened that during the last years of this eventful reign, the cause of Protestantism, as understood by some of the more aggressive among the reformers, passed under a cloud. Cromwell was executed under a bill of attainder in July 1540, and one effect of his removal was that Coverdale's "pointing hands" ceased to appear in the Great Bible, since all hope of introducing annotations was now finally extinguished.

Two years later a proposal was brought before Convocation for a new version by the bishops, but difficulties arose, through Gardiner, about the rendering of a long list of ecclesiastical terms to which the Vulgate

had for centuries given traditional sanctity, and eventually the project came to nothing. In 1543 all Tyndale Bibles were prohibited, and it was ordered that the annotations and controversial matter in "Matthew's" Bible should be effaced and made illegible. Before long this prohibition was extended even to Coverdale, and the extension was accompanied in 1546 by a perfect holocaust of English Bibles and Testaments. The Great Bible was thus left to reign in solitary grandeur, while the use of it was by statute forbidden to the great bulk of the people, and was restricted to the upper classes. In the meantime, terrified at the ominous change in Henry's mood, many of the advanced reformers were flying for safety to Frankfort, Strasburg, Munich, and to other friendly towns upon the Continent. Under Edward VI. they were welcomed back in crowds by Cranmer and by the Protectorate, and exercised so powerful an influence that, if the young King's brief life had been prolonged, England might soon have become a very hotbed of Calvinism. The Marian persecutions drove them once more headlong into exile. With the accession of the resolute "Guardian of the middle way" they again took courage and recrossed the sea. During the reign of Elizabeth they strove their uttermost to find favour in the royal sight, and to have the Anglican Church, which stood midway between the two extremes of Romanism and ultra-Protestantism, remodelled in accordance with the principles which they had imbibed abroad. It is of the utmost importance to bear in mind the existence, and the untiring activity, of this extreme left wing of the Reformation. We shall make

closer acquaintance with it by-and-by, in connection with the Genevan Bible; but first we must complete our brief review of the twenty years that separate the last English version of Henry's reign from that memorable revision which made its first appearance soon after the accession of Elizabeth.

In 1545 there occurred an event which had no slight effect in modifying the vacillating temper of the King. Many a hopeful heart had looked forward to a general Council of the Church as the best available means of securing its peaceful regeneration. Much therefore was expected from the first meeting of the Council of Trent. But it soon became apparent that the Jesuits, then as always the most dangerous enemies of truth and freedom, would carry the day, and that Rome would emerge both narrower and more uncompromising than ever, and also infinitely more in earnest. Henry appears to have been seriously alarmed. In his dread of the Counter-Reformation he felt disposed to revert to the policy of the minister whom, only five years before, he had so cynically allowed to be beheaded. He even directed Cranmer to "*pen a form for the alteration of the mass into a communion.*" But Henry's days were now numbered, and in January 1547 he died. There succeeded to the vacant throne his son by the Protestant Jane Seymour, a precocious boy of only nine years old. In defiance of the late King's will the direction of affairs was assumed by Jane's brother, Edward Seymour, under the title of the Duke of Somerset, and the ecclesiastical engines were at once reversed.

It is happily no part of the business of a historian of

the English Bible to record the doings of that clique of greedy nobles who formed the Council of the Regency. With the solitary exception of the invertebrate but amiable Cranmer, it would be difficult to name a single disinterested, or unselfish, or even ordinarily honest man among them all.

No Jesuit could wish the Protestant cause a worse fate than its exploitation by this band of sordid adventurers, who, under the mask of piety, made such frenzied haste to fill their pockets at the expense of the Church. Their works were like unto them ; and Somerset House, built with the stones of St Mary-le-Strand and of the Church of the Knights of St John, formed a suitable monument of the plundering proclivities of this inglorious Protectorate.

With Cranmer's beautiful compilation, the Book of Common Prayer, we are not here concerned ; nor yet with the general liturgical history of the reign ; and we rejoice to be able to turn our backs on an interval of vindictive vandalism and whitewash which has not unjustly been described as "a harvest time for thieves, and a high holiday for the profane."

No new version of the English Bible was attempted under Edward VI., but all restrictions on the printing and reading of the current versions were removed. It was again ordered that every parish should have a copy of the Great Bible set up in church, and also a copy of the paraphrase by Erasmus of the four gospels. Taverner's private translation was re-issued, and seven editions of the Great Bible, three of Matthew's, two of Coverdale's, and thirty-five of the New Testament,

most of them by Tyndale, were published between the years 1547 and 1553 inclusive.

With the accession of Mary Tudor all the privileges which from time to time had been conceded to the study of the Bible naturally suffered eclipse, and England found itself once more Roman Catholic. Nevertheless, the open arms with which the Queen was received by the nation at large supply the best possible comment on the lamentable exhibition which had recently been made by the truculent Protestantism of the Protectorate.

But if the great mass of the population had deeply resented the violence of the political raiders under the rule of Somerset and of Northumberland, they had no desire to be handed over to the tender mercies either of Rome or Spain. Unfortunately the Queen never came into any real touch with her subjects. She failed to understand either their Saxon love of independence or their love of England. Their feeling was in favour of the old Catholicism rather than the new Protestantism, but it was in favour also of ecclesiastical autocracy. The religion which they desired for themselves was the religion of the old Church without the Pope; a religion of reverent services conducted in a language which they could understand, and framed so as to maintain as far as possible intact their liturgical continuity with the past.

But Mary, who, if ill-advised was at least more sincerely conscientious than either Henry or Elizabeth, and who if she shocks us by her anti-Protestant fervour, yet honestly believed that Protestantism and damnation

were convertible terms, was speedily guilty of three initial diplomatic blunders. First, she renounced the national independence, and placed herself at the feet of the foreign potentate from whose yoke her father had shaken England free ; next she married a Spaniard, and a fanatical champion of the Inquisition ; while lastly, by her moody and half insane barbarity in kindling the awful fires of Smithfield, she showed the whole world that there were among the Protestants brave earnest men quite as ready to die for their religion as others of baser metal were to live upon it.

Nothing could have been better calculated than such a course as this to render impossible for England a creed which relied upon such means for its support, and to burn out of men's memories the low estimate of the reformed faith which their bitter experience of the late carnival of masquerading Calvinists had burnt into them. The martyrdom of Archbishop Cranmer, to take only the most conspicuous example, did far more to further the cause of the Reformation than all the Queen's violence could do to retard it.

The Genevan, or, as it is popularly called, the "Breeches Bible,"* was the offspring of the Marian terror. Among the many Protestant strongholds on the Continent which offered hospitality and protection to English exiles, was the Lutheran city of Frankfort.

* In Genesis iii. 7, where the Authorised Version has "made themselves aprons," the Genevan Bible reads "breeches." The rendering, however, is not peculiar to this Bible ; it is to be found both in the Wycliffe Bible and in Caxton's "*Golden Legend*," where we read "took figge leuis and sewed them togyder in maner of brechis."

No sooner, however, had the safety of the fugitives been well secured within its walls, than there broke out a stormy controversy among their leaders with reference to the ritual system of the revised English Prayer Book of 1552. The more moderate or conforming party, under the guidance of Richard Cox, afterwards Bishop of Ely, were prepared to abide by the ceremonial requirements of the book as it then stood. The Nonconformists, represented by John Knox, who had been chaplain to Edward VI., scented popery and superstition in every page, and declined to accept it at all, except as a convenient point of departure for further and fundamental changes. Hotter and hotter waxed the quarrel, until in 1555 the Knox faction came to an open rupture with their opponents, and, shaking off the dust of their feet upon Frankfort, betook themselves to the more congenial atmosphere of Geneva, "the holy city of the Alps," the Mecca of the reformed faith.

It is to these seceding Calvinists, the source and fountainhead of that anti-sacramental movement which as years went on gradually broadened and deepened into Puritanism, that we owe the Genevan Bible.

This new version had a wonderful success. Between 1560 and the Civil War, no fewer than 160 editions of it passed into circulation, sixty of them during the reign of Elizabeth alone. Though it naturally found but little favour at the Court, or with Convocation, its scholarship cast the Great Bible completely into the shade, and after 1569 no fresh issue of that version was made. For many years it proved no unworthy rival even of the King's standard edition, and competed with it

almost on equal terms for popularity. Throughout Scotland it speedily established itself as the household Bible. In England it was eagerly welcomed by that new middle class * from which, after the importation of Calvinism from the Continent, that faith derived its main supporters; a class which, while it cannot be said to have been created, was at least largely reinforced, both by the rapid expansion of trade and commerce and by the transfer of the abbey-lands.

It is not without interest to observe that during part of the years 1558-9, Miles Coverdale, then seventy years of age, was a resident in Geneva. In 1539, at the invitation of Cromwell, we found him acting as editor of the Great Bible. In 1551 he was promoted to be Bishop of Exeter, only to be deprived of his See under Queen Mary and to be obliged to fly for his life. Thus the main thread of his history serves to connect the most melodious of our translators, and the most indefatigable of our revisers, with three of the best known Bibles of the Tudor period, namely, his own version of 1535; the Great Bible of 1539; and the Genevan Bible of 1560, whose designation at once associates it with that famous city which in the sixteenth century was the sheet-anchor of the Reformation.

The book cannot be properly appreciated apart from its local parentage, and in order fully to understand the great popularity and prestige of the Genevan Bible, it is necessary to realise the veneration in which the name of Geneva had come to be held throughout the Protestant world. Let us briefly recall the main events

* Brewer's *Henry VIII.*, ii., p. 470.

in her religious history a generation or so before the year 1560.

In 1526, nine years after the publication by Luther of his famous *Theses*, and six years after he had publicly burnt the Pope's bull at the Elster gate of Wittenberg, Geneva had thrown off her foreign yoke and shaken herself free from the control of the Dukes of Savoy. A little later, and as a natural consequence of her political emancipation, she had adopted the principles of the Reformation, and had crowned her newly won independence by repudiating the spiritual authority of the Roman Bishop.

But, in adopting the Reformation, Geneva had by no means put off the old Adam of her turbulent civic life with all its jealousies, feuds, and factions. William Farel, the leading spirit of the Genevan Church, was not a man of sufficient force of character to cope with so difficult a situation. He was quick, therefore, to seize upon the happy accident of Calvin's presence in the town, and to adjure him as the chosen instrument of God's providence to remain in Geneva, and to take upon himself the lay directorship of that somewhat volcanic community.

Under Calvin's iron rule and discipline it was not long before Geneva came to rank as the Wittenberg of the Reformed Churches. Through her Academy she provided a centre for both classical and theological learning. From Italy, France, England, Germany, young students flocked freely to her schools. Refugees from every quarter found an asylum within her walls. First resentfully expelled, and then again recalled as

indispensable, Calvin gave up a life which it had been his intention to dedicate to study, to the task for the accomplishment of which he had been so unexpectedly summoned.

Imperious, arrogant, dictatorial, and autocratic in temperament, he was one of those powerful personalities who both know exactly what it is they wish to do, and have the resolution and ability to do it. To the accomplishment of his mission the new Pope of Geneva brought an inflexible will and a keenly penetrative judgment. When to these characteristics we add his inexhaustible energy, his French-born love of system, his genius for organisation, his great learning, and the tenacity of his moral grip, we have a combination of qualities in which men recognise their natural lord and master.

In the circumstances of the time such a vigorous personality was sorely needed. Continental Protestantism had reached a very critical stage in its progress. The initial impulse which had been given to it by the creative energy of Luther was dying down. As a profession of faith it was everywhere beginning to reveal its inherent weakness. Strong to pull down, it seemed incapable of building up. It was a principle of disintegration, not a principle of unity. It lacked coherence, it lacked stability, it lacked organic vitality. It was, moreover, suffering from internal quarrels of the utmost bitterness, for it seems to be one of the misfortunes of the human intellect that no questions are ever so furiously debated as those which are incapable of solution. There was therefore a real and even an

imminent danger that the Reformation movement, frittering away its early vigour in a ceaseless and barren rivalry of definitions and disputations, might either perish of moral and spiritual inanition, or else evaporate and disappear in a hazy mist of controversial speculation.

That events did, in fact, turn out otherwise, is in a large measure due to Calvin, and to his disciples in doctrine, the Puritans. His eagle eye took in the essential features of the religious crisis. To the practical intensity of his nature it was manifest that no spiritual enthusiasm could long maintain itself on the dry husks of theological dogmas. While others were arguing he was acting. Enforcing his rigorous principles upon the citizens of the little state of Geneva, he set himself to show the world what religion could do, as a vitalising power, in the political and social sphere. Self-control as the basis of moral life, self-sacrifice as the secret of the common weal, the subordination of rights to duties as the foundation stone of political ethics, these were his fundamental axioms of administration. Compared with the "*Republic*" of Plato, or with the large-hearted "*Utopia*" of Sir Thomas More, most of us instinctively shudder at the narrowness, the one-sidedness, the doctrinaire austerity, the joyless acerbity, of the Calvinistic discipline. But we have to remind ourselves that it is an easier thing, as the annals of More's public life may serve to show, to construct abstract political constitutions than it is to govern men, and it would be unjust to allow our natural antipathies to blind us to the plain evidence of historical fact. Calvin was

the saviour of Geneva, and Geneva was the saviour of the Reformation.

By insisting upon the paramount importance of conduct, he once more compelled attention to an ideal which had been too long discarded—the ideal of character. Under the stress of a new sense of responsibility and moral obligation the little municipality of Geneva became, all but in name, a church. To Calvin she owed it that her theology acquired system, and her discipline organisation. Throughout the sixteenth century we can hardly over-estimate her influence. Standing midway between the giant systems of Spain and of Rome, she confronted, with her mere handful of amateur soldiery, a secular imperialism that was impatient to crush her on the one side, and a hierarchical absolutism, against which she was a living protest, on the other. To Pope Pius V., Geneva was doubtless "a nest of devils and apostates," as to Henry II. of France she was a "swarm of vermin." But to the supporters of the Reformation she was a fortress too strong for the enemy to carry and too dangerous for him to ignore; a glad beacon of hope whose cheering rays helped to light up the dark places of spiritual and temporal confusion. For in that small city-state men saw the visible and active embodiment of a conviction which lay deep down in many a thoughtful mind; the conviction that there might subsist a political community without the Empire, and a Church of Christ without the Papacy.

The forerunner of the Genevan Bible was an English New Testament which came out in 1557. Like its

successor, this version was published at Geneva, but it bore no name. Practically, however, there is no doubt that it may be attributed to William Whittingham, who was Dean of Durham under Elizabeth, a Fellow of All Souls, and connected with Calvin by marriage. He was a man of large learning, and one of the ablest of that company of scholars whose joint labours, between January 1558 and the spring of 1560, produced the complete Genevan Bible.

Of this New Testament our space precludes more than a mere passing notice, but there are two points with regard to it which deserve attention. It is, in the first place, the earliest translation to adopt that division of the text into verses,* which was made, during a ride between Paris and Lyons, by Robert Stephens in his Greek Testament of 1551, and which reappears in the Genevan Bible of 1560. In the second place, it forms the groundwork of the revision, by some other and unknown hand, which we find printed as the New Testament portion of the complete Bible which shortly followed it.

Knox, Coverdale, and several others among the revisers, who had been at work under the supervision of Calvin and Beza, left Geneva before their task was

* The division of the Bible into *chapters*, or *sections*, was adopted to facilitate its use for reading aloud in synagogues or in churches, and belongs to the history of the manuscript Bible. The division into *verses* belongs to the history of the printed Bible, and was made for purposes of reference and citation. Our Bible was divided into chapters in the thirteenth century: either by Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, or by Cardinal Hugo de Sancto Caro, a Dominican monk. As above stated, the division into verses is due to R. Stephens, who in 1556-7 extended it to his Latin Bible.

complete; but we learn from Anthony A. Wood that "Whittingham, with one or two more, being resolved to go through with the work, did tarry a year and a half after Queen Elizabeth came to the Crown." The "one or two more" appear to have been Anthony Gilby, of Christ's College, Cambridge, and Thomas Sampson, Dean of Chichester, and subsequently Dean of Christ Church in the early year of the reign of Elizabeth.*

The book is entitled "*The Bible and Holy Scriptures conteyned in the Olde and Newe Testament translated according to the Ebrue and Greke, and conferred with the best translations in divers languages. With moste profitable annotations upon all the hard places, and other things of great importance.*"

The dedication, expressed in terms of admiration and respect, but exceptionally free from offensive adulation, is to that illustrious sovereign, daughter of the Protestant Anne Boleyn, upon whom the hopes of the Reformation were then centred. On the very day of her coronation, Elizabeth had been presented, as the royal procession was making its way along Cheapside, with a copy of the Holy Scriptures, the *Verbum veritatis*, from the hands of a venerable old man representing Time, with Truth standing beside him as his child, had reverently kissed it and had pledged herself "diligently to read therein." After the dedication, which characteristically enough comprises an exhorta-

* The cost of the undertaking was borne by the Genevan congregation. Prominent among them was John Bodley, father of the founder of the Bodleian Library.

tion to put all Papists to the sword, there follows an epistle addressed "To our Beloved in the Lord, the Brethren* of England, Scotland, and Ireland," this being the name by which the Calvinists were commonly known before the term Puritan had become attached to them.

Based, as regards the Old Testament, mainly on the Great Bible, and, as regards the New Testament, on Whittingham's version of 1557, which was itself a revision of Tyndale, the Genevan Bible was the result of a careful collation with the Hebrew and Greek originals, and of a free use of the best recent Latin versions, especially Beza's, as well as of the standard French and German translations. It is essentially a revision, and not a new translation; though perhaps we ought partially to except from this statement the prophetical and poetical books, in which the changes introduced are very numerous.

In many ways this edition formed a new departure, and offered new attractions. Especially was this the case with regard to bulk. The Great Bible was a huge unwieldy folio, suited only for liturgical use. Its rival was for the most part issued as a quarto of comfortable size, and at a moderate price. In place of the heavy black letter to which readers had been accustomed, there appeared the clear Roman type with which our modern press has made us familiar. The division of the chapters into verses, however we may condemn it as a literary device, has undeniable advantages, both for

* A Society of Christian Brethren was founded in London in 1525 for the distribution of Bibles, Testaments, and Protestant literature, and had local branches in many of the seaport towns.

the preacher and for private reference and study, to say nothing of its effect in facilitating the prominence that soon began to attach to particular favourite texts. The employment, too, of italics, to mark words not represented in the original Hebrew and Greek, had an exceptional value for readers who believed every syllable of the Bible to have been directly inspired. The running commentary of illustrative and explanatory notes was a further boon of no little importance. For the harsh measures of the Queen against "Prophesying" had emptied half the city pulpits, and had made qualified ministers of the Word most inconveniently scarce. Prophesying was one of the most highly valued of Puritan institutions, and was the term applied to the periodical clerical meetings, or local gatherings, of the Protestant clergy for mutual instruction and training as preachers, gatherings in which Elizabeth fancied that she could detect the cloven hoof of faction and disloyalty. But not merely was the book thus made self-interpreting. Its usefulness was yet further enhanced by maps, and woodcuts, and elaborate tables, by an appendix of metrical psalms, and finally, by an interpolation, in all editions after 1579, of a catechism so pronounced in its Calvinism as to suggest a design among the "Brethren" of superseding, through its instrumentality, the authoritative catechism of the Church.

Neither cumbersome nor costly; terse, and vigorous in style; literal, and yet boldly idiomatic, the Genevan version was at once a conspicuous advance on all the Biblical labours that had preceded it, and an edition

which could fairly claim to be well abreast of the soundest contemporary scholarship.

Apart, however, from its intrinsic merits, and from its incidental attractions, the introduction of the Bible into England, from the point of view of its authors, was singularly opportune. Secular literature was at this time all but unknown. Shakespeare was not yet born. Spencer was but six years old, and Bacon in his cradle. With the exception of the Bible, the Prayer Book, Foxe's "*Book of Martyrs*," and Calvin's "*Institutes*," it is difficult to recall a book which had any considerable circulation. Meanwhile the habit of Bible-reading had been steadily gaining a firm hold upon that large and increasing section of the community to which the Genevan Bible would most forcibly appeal.

Launched into publicity upon a flood-tide of Protestant elation, it at once arrested attention and secured respect by the prestige of its parent city, by the renown of its sponsors, Calvin, Beza, and Knox, the two former of whom were the best Biblical scholars of the day, and by the known character and attainments of those responsible for it as a revision. In many a house, too, it must vividly have recalled to recent exiles the hospitalities and kindnesses which, in the dark days of their adversity, had been extended to them on a foreign soil.

Such, then, was the famous Genevan Bible, and there attaches to it a twofold interest. Not only does it constitute an important link in the chain of English versions, but it strikes a new historical note. Con-

sidered as a fresh rendering of the Scriptures it stands creditably free from ecclesiastical bias. Considered as a literary whole it has about it the character of a Calvinist manifesto. Of the notes, those famous "spectacles for weak eyes," probably not more than a twentieth part could fairly be called sectarian, but their general tone and savour are not to be mistaken. The contrast of "elect" and "reprobate," which is met with throughout; the marked omission of all the saints' days from the calendar; the list of Old Testament names, selected in order to mark, in the holders of them, a special dedication to God; the table that directs the reader to those passages in the Bible which seemed to bear with most weight on the cardinal points in the Calvinistic creed; the characteristic distaste for all forms of recreation and amusement, which comes out so curiously in the heading above St Mark's account of the murder of the Baptist, "*the inconvenience of dauncing*"; these are a few among the many indications which abound to show that this publication is a book with a special purpose, a book undertaken at the instance of a Calvinist congregation, by Calvinist scholars, for Calvinist readers.

We are thus brought within sight of a new phase in the English Reformation, and are enabled to recognise the gradual approach of that internecine struggle between Genevan and Anglican, Presbyterian and Episcopalian, Congregationalist and Churchman, which, if it was for a while kept in the background by the pressure of an overmastering anxiety as to England's very existence as an independent nation, was yet

never for one moment abandoned through the whole reign of Elizabeth, and was destined to usher in, under her successors, when authority had ripened into oppression and contumacy into rebellion, the yet more momentous conflict between political liberty and divine right.

In Germany it had not been possible to keep political and religious issues apart. But in England the case was different. While all parties were practically agreed that some reformation of the abuses of the Church was indispensable, the large majority were for a purified Catholicism without the Pope, and a relatively small minority for a reconstruction of the old creed, and even for a new form of Church government.

The wide popularity which was so rapidly won by the Genevan Bible had two important results. It undermined the titular authority of the Great Bible, which beyond all doubt was inferior to it as a translation ; and it forced Archbishop Parker into the endeavour to supersede it by a Bible whose excellence might deserve to be stamped with the hall-mark of Church and State. To acquiesce in the free circulation of the Genevan Bible, side by side not only with the Great Bible, but with the Bibles of Coverdale and Matthew, would have been to condone a medley of authorities almost equivalent to spiritual chaos.

It must be borne in mind that our great Tudor Queen, whose sagacity was always alert to discern and recognise

> "The limits of resistance, and the bounds
> Determining concession,"

differed greatly from Henry VIII. in her attitude, during the first period of her reign, towards the current English versions of the Scriptures. She had begun very cautiously. Crowned according to the Romish ritual, she daily attended mass, she is said to have formally announced her accession to the Pope (though this is denied by good authorities), and she listened with affected coyness to a proposal for her hand by Philip of Spain. A daughter rather of the Renaissance than of the Reformation, firmly opposed to whatever she considered dangerous to the cause of order, or to the supremacy of the Crown, but with no strong religious convictions of her own, Elizabeth would have no version "*either abled or disabled.*" She would favour neither Papist nor Gospeller. She would be the leader of no one section of her subjects, but, first and last, the Queen of England.

Left to itself it was inevitable that the Genevan should, on its merits, dethrone the Great Bible; yet it was plainly impossible for Convocation to erect the Puritan book into a standard version, or to obtain the Queen's authorisation of an annotated Bible so undisguisedly associated with the names of Calvin, whom she detested, and Knox, whose "*First Blast against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*" rankled in her mind, and whom she detested still more. Elizabeth could not openly favour the Protestants without giving offence to Rome, and Spain, and France. The essence of her policy was to do her utmost to avoid war, and in the meantime to build up a strong and united England in the shadow of peace; to bring about a

religious compromise under which all might fairly be made to live, to preserve order through her bishops and through her Court of High Commission, and to be tolerant of anything that fell short of political faction.

With regard to Parker, his own love of uniformity, if nothing else, would sooner or later have caused him to address himself to a task which, if there was to be any finality in the interpretation of and the appeal to Scripture, must inevitably be undertaken without delay. Accordingly, about the year 1563-4, the Archbishop set himself to organise a select revision committee, and the version for which they became responsible is historically known as the Bishops' Bible.

The instructions laid down for their guidance were substantially as follows. They were to keep to the Great Bible except where "it varieth manifestly" from the originals. They were to set great store by the Latin versions of Munster and Pagninus, of which the former is often wanting in accuracy. They were to avoid "bitter notes," and "determination in places of controversy." Passages containing matter that did not tend to edification, as, for example, "Genealogies," were to be marked off, so that a reader might leave them out. Words that offended good taste were to be "expressed with more convenient terms and phrases."

The time occupied by the work was about four years. In October 1568 it was published, as a stately and imposing folio, with the plain title, "*The Holie Bible, containing the Old Testament and the New.*" There was no dedication, but on the title-page was a

portrait of the Queen, in front of the Book of Joshua an engraving of Lord Leicester in his armour, and in front of the Psalms one of Cecil, Lord Burleigh. The division into verses was adopted from the Genevan Bible. A considerable space was given to tables, calendars, almanacs, woodcuts, and maps. Parker contributed a preface, and Cranmer's preface to the Great Bible was reprinted. On the 5th October 1568, the Archbishop, being in weak health, wrote to Cecil asking him to present a copy to the Queen. Enclosed with it was a private letter of dedication to her, in which reference is made to translations "*which have not been laboured in your realm, having inspersed diverse prejudicial notes which might have been well spared*," an allusion, not too obscurely veiled, to the Genevan Bible. But whatever she may have said in private, Elizabeth took no public notice of the Bishops' Bible, nor did she ever offer to give it her formal sanction and authority.

The distinguishing method of the Genevan Committee had been a system of careful and methodical collaboration, as contrasted with the isolated labours of the pioneers of translation. It was the Archbishop's intention to proceed upon similar lines. He does not, however, appear to have succeeded in providing any adequate machinery for attuning and harmonising the idiosyncrasies of independent contributors working in separate fields. The consequence is that the Bishops' Bible is a work of very uneven merit. Parker, who was an excellent scholar himself, no doubt exercised some general supervision as editor. But much more than mere central control was needed if a cento of unrelated

parts was ever to be successfully moulded into an organic literary whole. It would probably be unjust to take the Bishop of Rochester, to whom the revision of the Psalter was in the first instance allotted, as a fair sample of colleagues who held much stricter views of their responsibilities; but the principle on which he, at any rate, avowed himself to be acting is plainly incompatible with honest work. "When part of a Psalm is quoted in the New Testament," he says, "I translate the Hebrew *according to the translation thereof in the New Testament*, for the avoiding of the offence that may rise upon divers translations."

The revisers of the Old Testament seem to have adhered too closely to the renderings of the Great Bible to achieve for their version any very conspicuous independent value. Their rendering of the Apocrypha is practically the same as that of the Great Bible, which was based on the Latin text. But the New Testament, as re-edited in 1572 after the pungent and incisive criticisms of Lawrence, headmaster of Shrewsbury, attains a much higher level, and is as remarkable for the advance in scholarship which it exhibits, more especially in the treatment of the Greek particles and prepositions, as for its courageous independence. It is the originator of many felicitous phrases which have been perpetuated by their adoption into our Authorised Version, such as "the middle wall of partition," "less than the least of all saints." It surprises the reader with an occasional quaint literalism, as in St Mark vii. 27: "Cast it unto the little dogges"; and again, in 1 Corinthians xii. 7: "A pricke of the fleshe," or with

an archaism such as, "He that killeth a sheep for me knatcheth a dog," Isaiah lxvi. 3. (Margin, "cutteth off a dogge's necke.")

With regard to the commentary which accompanies this Bible not much need be said. Many of the notes are taken, and taken without acknowledgment, from the Genevan Bible; but the annotators have been so conscientiously mindful of their instructions to avoid bitterness and controversy, that they have not unfrequently fallen into a colourless feebleness which scarcely rises above the level of "*tolerabiles ineptiæ*."

On the whole it must be admitted that the Bishops' Bible, though strongly supported by Convocation, and though it superseded the Great Bible in liturgical use, has been justly ranked among the least successful of our English versions. Its imposing appearance did not atone for its defects. It was costly. It was cumbersome. It did not satisfy scholars. It was ill-suited to the general public. The editing, it must be added, left much to be desired. The illustrations with which the printer has been allowed to ornament some of the initial letters belong rather to the Renaissance than to the Reformation, and suggest a keener relish for the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid than for St Paul. It is difficult, for example, to reconcile what might fairly be expected from due episcopal supervision with that startling woodcut of "Leda and the Swan" which caused the second edition of this version to be nicknamed the "Leda" Bible, and which has so unaccountably been permitted to decorate the initial letter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. After a life of some forty

years, and after passing through nineteen editions, the Bishops' Bible ceased to be printed. There is no copy bearing a later date than 1606.

The direct descendant of the Bishops' Bible in the line of our English versions is the King's Bible, but there is also an English translation, largely drawn upon by the revisers of that great work, and belonging (at any rate, in part) to the Tudor period, which we must now go on to describe. We refer to what is known as the Douai Bible, the work of certain Oxford scholars in exile from England, and having their headquarters at one time in Flanders and at another time in France.

The New Testament of this version has a niche of its own in our national history. It was upon a copy of it that Mary, Queen of Scots, on the evening before her execution, swore a last solemn oath of innocence. Rudely interrupted by the Earl of Kent, as swearing a valueless oath on a false book, Mary retorted with quiet dignity, "Does your lordship think that my oath would be better if I swore on your translation, in which I do not believe?"

The Douai Bible may be described as a Roman Catholic pendant to the Genevan Bible. Both were produced on foreign soil. Both were from the hands of men living in exile on account of their creed. In both might be detected an ulterior aim beyond the mere faithful rendering of the text. With the one is indelibly associated the persistent endeavour of the extreme Protestants to remodel the English Church on the lines of Continental Calvinism; while with the

other is historically linked the combined effort of Spain and Rome to crush Elizabeth into subjection to the Pope. Let us glance briefly at the circumstances under which this Roman Catholic version was made.

On the very date of the publication of the Bishops' Bible, the year 1568, there was founded at Douai—then a city of Flanders, and one of the chief Continental centres for Roman Catholic refugees from Great Britain, —an English College. Its founder, William Allen, belonged to an old Lancashire family, and had been a Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, and a Canon of York under Queen Mary. His fervent and untiring zeal as an agitator against the Elizabethan settlement of religion was rewarded in 1587 with a Cardinal's hat, and he was even then marked out as the future Cardinal of England, and Archbishop of Canterbury. Allen's College was affiliated to the University of Douai, an institution which had been established a few years earlier by Philip the Second of Spain, within whose vast dominions the city itself lay. Open to any English Roman Catholic students who might be seeking a college education, it was primarily designed for the training of a disciplined body of priests, as the possible successors in England of the moribund Marian clergy, and as ready instruments, when opportunity should offer, of the restoration of the wandering sheep to the Roman fold.

Of the Jesuit missions and seminary priests of whom we read so much during the last years of Elizabeth's reign,* Douai was a fertile source. The

* Green's *History*, ii., pp. 406-7.

Douai Bible, promoted by Allen himself, but actually translated under the superintendence of Gregory Martin, once a fellow of St John's College, Oxford, was published in two parts, and at an interval of nearly thirty years. For this delay the editors were in no respect to blame, for both Testaments had been completed before 1582. It was occasioned, as the translators expressly state, only by the want of adequate funds. The first volume to appear was the New Testament, printed at Rheims in 1582,* the year as it may be remembered which followed the execution in London, on a charge of treason, of Campion, one of the Jesuit emissaries either from Douai or from Rome. The migration of Allen's College to Rheims between the years of 1578 and 1593 was the result of political disturbances. It was at Douai that the Old Testament was printed in 1609-10, and it is from Douai that the complete Bible has taken its name.

When the Rheims Testament made its appearance in England, in 1582, the nation was passing through a period of intense excitement. Times had indeed changed since Elizabeth could with equanimity forbid that any version of the Scriptures should be "*either abled or disabled.*" Twelve years had gone by since the Vatican had declared war upon her by a bull of

* Great prominence was given to this edition owing to W. Fulke's refutations of its Roman Catholic commentary, published in 1589. Fulke printed the Rheims Testament and the 1572 edition of the Bishops' Bible in parallel columns, adding to each chapter a vigorous polemic on the Rheims notes. His very able and learned *Defence of English Bible Translations* is among the Parker Society's publications. It appeared in 1583.

CHAP. III.

For vvitnessing the vocation of the Gentils, as being the Apostle of the Gentils, he is in prison: 13 Wherein the Gentils therfore haue cause to reioyce, rather then to shrinke. So he saith, 14 and also praieth to God (vvho is almightie) to confirme their invvard man, though the outvvard be infirmed by persecutions.

1 FOR this cause, I Paul the prisoner of
2 IESVS Christ, for you Gentiles: † if
yet you haue heard the dispensation of
the grace of God, vvhich is giuen me
3 tovvard you, † because according to
reuelation the sacrament vvas made
knovven to me, as I haue vvrittē before
4 in breife: † according as you reading
may vnderstand my vvisedom in the mysterie of Christ,
5 † vvhich vnto other generations vvas not knovven to the
sonnes of men, as novv it is reuealed to his holy Apostles &
6 Prophets in the Spirit. † The Gentils to be coheires & con-
corporat and comparticipant of his promis in Christ IESVS
7 by the Gospel: † vvhereof I am made a minister according
to the gift of the grace of God, which is giuen me according
1. Cor. 15, 9. 8 to the operation of his povver. † To me * the least of al the
sainctes is giuen this grace, among the Gentils to euangelize
9 the vnsearcheable riches of Christ, † and to illuminate al
men vvhat is the dispensatiō of the sacrament hidden [c] from
10 vvorldes in God, vvho created al things: † that the mani-
fold vvisedom of God, may be notified to the Princes and
11 Potestats in the celestials by the Church, † according to the
[c] prefinitiō of worldes, vvhich he made in Christ IESVS our
12 Lord. † In vvhom vve haue affiance and accesse in confi-
13 dence, by the faith of him. † [b] For the vvhich cause I desire
that you faint not in my tribulations for you, vvhich is your
glorie.
14 † For this cause I bovve my knees to the Father of our
15 Lord IESVS Christ, † of vvhom al paternitie in the heauens
16 and in earth is named, † that he giue you according to the
riches of his glorie, povver to be fortified by his Spirit in the
17 inner man. † Christ :: to dvvel by faith in your hartes,
18 rooted and founded [c] in charitie, † that you may be able to
comprehend vvith al the sainctes, vvhat is the bredth, and
19 length, and height, and depth, † to knovv also the charitie of

c That is, for euer before.

b The Epistle vpon the 16 Sunday after Pentecost.

:: Christ dwelleth in vs by his giftes, and vve be iust by those his giftes remaining and resident in vs, & not by Christes proper iustice onely, as the Heretikes affirme.

c Not faith only must be in vs, but charitie vvhich accōplisheth al vertues.

Ttt iij Christ,

excommunication, and had pronounced her to be no longer Queen. Men's minds were full to overflowing with the awful memories of St Bartholomew, with the butcheries of Alva, with the iniquities of the Inquisition, with the revolt of the Netherlands. Not in England alone, but also in Ireland and Scotland, the Jesuit agents of Rome were hard at work in undermining the Queen's throne. Elizabeth herself went in daily terror of her life. Even the extreme Puritans were held temporarily in check by the consciousness that the fortunes of their cause were dependent on her escape from the malignity of their common foe. From every side the feeling was borne in upon the nation at large that England was nearing the crisis of her fate, and under the pressure of political peril Protestantism became identified with patriotism.

It is not difficult to realise the reception with which at such a time the Rheims Testament, with its aggressively Roman notes, was likely to meet. The book was but one more addition to the signs, much too numerous already, of the sleepless activity of the common enemy. To harbour it was declared high treason, while through the spies and searchers of the Government not a few who were suspected of promoting its circulation were brought to the torture of the rack.

Such being the circumstances under which the first instalment of the Douai Bible made its appearance in England, it now remains to say a few words on the version itself.

In an elaborate preface of more than twenty pages the Roman reader receives a kind of apologetic explana-

tion of what might naturally strike him as a departure from the principles of his Church. For the promiscuous distribution of vernacular versions had never been in favour with Rome, nor did she at all approve of any private and unauthorised interpretation of the Scriptures. It may be pointed out that even as late as the year 1844 the then Pope, Gregory XVI., true to the policy of the Councils of Toulouse and of Trent, enjoined his "venerable brethren" to remove from the hands of the faithful all "Bibles translated into the vulgar tongue." To Protestants must the odium be left of casting, as these Douai editors so quaintly phrase it, "the holy to dogges and pearles to hogges." But, seeing that false and heretical versions were being scattered broadcast, it might not be inexpedient to reassure the faithful by presenting them with a semi-Anglicised Bible, well protected with a bulwark of anti-Protestant annotations. By so doing, its editors might hope for ever to wipe away the long standing reproach of Rome, that, while she persistently condemned the work of scholars outside her pale, she took no steps herself to render their critical labours superfluous.

There are two distinguishing features in the Douai Testament which bring it into no fanciful relation with the Protestant versions. It is a translation, by countrymen of our own, directly from the Vulgate, though reference is continuously made to the Greek original, as well as to the Geneva and Bishops' Bibles; and it is in the highest degree intolerant and controversial in its notes. Geddes, himself a Roman Catholic, speaks of them as "virulent, and manifestly calculated to support a

system, not of genuine Catholicity but of Transalpine Popery."

Under the first of these aspects we may group it with the Wycliffe versions and with the Bible of Coverdale, whose originals were, as he tells us, "the Douche and the Latine," while, under its second aspect, it recalls the methods of Tyndale and Rogers, and all of those polemically annotated Bibles whose doctrinal sting is mainly in their supplemental matter.

To the Latin of the Vulgate the Douai translators were even slavishly deferential. Their translation has accordingly one fatal, though perhaps not unintentional, fault. Considered as a whole, it is not English. Almost any chapter from the unmodernised editions will supply instances of this defect. "*Purge the old leaven that you may be a new paste, as you are azymes*" (1 Cor. v. 7). "*He exinanited himself*" (Phil. ii. 7). "*Thou hast fatted my head with oil, and my chalice inebriating how goodie it is,*" (Psalm xxiii. 5). "*Before your thorns did understand the old briar: as living so in wrath he swalloweth them*" (Psalm lvii. 10). "*The Syrach owls shall answer, and mermaids in the temples of pleasure*" (Isaiah xiii. 22).

No man could be better aware than a scholarly Englishman like Gregory Martin that such renderings as these were simply barbarous. Perhaps, then, his prevailing motive must be sought elsewhere than in any sympathy with the wants of the average Bible-reader. On the other hand, the Douai version has one great merit which is wanting in our Authorised Version, namely, that it holds fast to the principle of uniformity in its renderings whenever this principle is not pre-

judicial to the sense. Moreover, for serious students, it is just the uncompromising fidelity of the translators to their Vulgate,—which, in its New Testament, carries us back to the old Latin rendering of Greek manuscripts current in the middle of the second century,—that gives to this Rheims edition so considerable a value for the purposes of textual criticism. But were we under no other obligation to the editors than that they helped to encourage a better acquaintance with Jerome's Vulgate,* our debt to them would still be great.

For the Vulgate, though a composite work, will always rank among the most remarkable books of the world.† It is astonishing enough that a monk of the West should have been able, in his cell at Bethlehem, to carry through an undertaking of such magnitude as a translation of the Old Testament direct from the Hebrew, and a revision, by the aid of Greek manuscripts, of the pre-existing Latin versions of the New Testament. But the Vulgate has more in it than its nobility as a translation. It is the venerable source from which the Church has drawn the largest part of its ecclesiastical vocabulary. Terms now so familiar as to arouse no curiosity as to their origin, "scripture," "spirit," "penance," "sacrament," "communion," "salvation," "propitiation," "elements," "grace," "glory," "conversion," "discipline," "sanctification," "congregation," "election," "eternity," "justification," all come from Jerome's Bible. It is an imperishable record of that commanding genius that could so manipulate and

* *See* Appendix A.

† *See* Westcott, *The Bible in the Church*, pp. 130, 181, 191.

mould the majestic but inflexible language of Rome as to make it a fit and pliant instrument for the expression of modes of thought, of sentiments and images, conceived originally among Eastern associations and breathed upon by an Eastern spirit. And, yet again, while these Latin scriptures of the fourth century provide us with a link which we could ill afford to lose, between the Latin of classical times and the Romance languages which are its descendants, they at the same time serve to kindle the imagination with the memory of those thousand years during which the Vulgate reigned supreme, the one and only Bible of the West, the pride and pillar of that Latin Church to which, under the providence of God, Europe stands for ever indebted for the preservation of her spiritual and intellectual inheritance from the blind deluge of Northern barbarism.

THE KING'S BIBLE

"Felix opportunitate."

"At the time when that odious style which deforms the writings of Hall and of Lord Bacon was almost universal, appeared that stupendous work, the English Bible, a book which, if everything else in our language should perish, would alone suffice to show the whole extent of its beauty and power."

(*Macaulay's Essay on Dryden.*)

"Never was a great enterprise, like the production of our Authorised Version, carried out with less knowledge handed down to posterity of the labourers, their method and order of working."

(*Scrivener.*)

"The translation of King James's time took an excellent way. That part of the Bible was given to him who was most excellent in such a tongue, and then they met together, and one read the translation, the rest holding in their hands some Bible, either of the learned tongues, or French, Spanish, Italian, etc.; if they found any fault, they spoke; if not, he read on."

(*Selden's Table Talk.*)

CHAPTER VIII

THE AUTHORISED VERSION

ELIZABETH died in March 1603, and with the accession of James I. we arrive at length within sight of that monumental work which was destined not merely to eclipse but absolutely to efface all rivals, and to enter upon a reign which has endured unbroken for now nearly three hundred years, and in the undimmed lustre of which we yet live.

We need waste no words in praise of the Authorised Version. Being but a human work, it has its own defects, but none the less it is universally accepted as a literary masterpiece, as the noblest and most beautiful book in the world. All the more strange, therefore, is it to realise that a revision which has exercised so incalculable an influence upon religion, upon manners, upon literature, and upon character, should have had its origin in something very like an accident.

The Conference of 1604 which met by the royal command on the 14th, 16th, and 18th of January at Hampton Court, and in the very palace which had once belonged to Wolsey, had not been called with any view to the production of a new translation of the Bible. The sole

object of the meeting was to consider what is known as the "Millenary Petition." This was a petition to the throne by the Puritan section of the national Church. And, in presenting to the King their statement of grievances, that which the Puritan clergy had in mind was not the Bible, but the Prayer Book. They asked that some alteration might be made in the Church services, so as to purify them from what they deemed to be superstitious rites and ceremonies, such as the sign of the cross in baptism, the use of the ring in marriage, and the use of the surplice in church. They further petitioned for the provision of a well-trained ministry of preachers, and for a greater strictness in ecclesiastical discipline.

During the latter part of Elizabeth's reign this left wing of the English clergy had endeavoured to assert its claims with greater and greater pertinacity. But the endeavour had not been successful. The Queen had looked to her bishops to keep order, and if they showed themselves reluctant to face opposition, they soon discovered that they had a Tudor sovereign to reckon with. Grindal, for example, who was Parker's successor, was vindictively forced into retirement from his office, because he approved of the Puritan "prophesyings,"* while his Mistress did not. No pressure of events, not even the ominous gathering of the storm-clouds which were before long to burst over England in the Spanish Armada, had power to move the Guardian of the middle way from her settled policy of solidarity. In 1583 she made Whitgift

* Page 221.

Primate, Puritan though he was in creed, in the belief that he would prove himself to be a strong Churchman in government. In 1593 the non-conforming Puritans followed their consciences into banishment, and Whitgift was left free to devote his energies to the advancement of learning among the clergy, and to the reform of the ecclesiastical Courts.

When Presbyterian Scotland sent her King to occupy the vacant throne of England, the baffled hopes of Calvinism revived once more. The recent course of events in Europe had made the Puritans profoundly anxious. The Reformation had received a very serious check, and so far from carrying all before them its upholders were with difficulty even holding their own. Unless England herself stood firm to the cause of Protestantism, there was a very imminent danger that the Counter-Reformation would win the day, and that the blood of the Marian martyrs might prove after all to have been shed in vain. The accession of James thus found this Calvinist branch of the Church of England in a gloomy and despondent mood. Yet it seemed to them not impossible that with the new King the tide might be about to turn. If the Roman Catholics might fairly hope for something at the hands of the son of the late Queen of Scots, their religious opponents were not likely to forget the Northern Solomon's speech to the General Assembly in 1590. "As for our neighbour kirk in England," James had protested, "*it is an evil-said Mass in English, wanting nothing but the liftings.*"

But if James had thus seemed to befriend the

Kirk in 1590, he had written his "*Basilikon Dôron*" in support of the divine right of Kings only a few years later, and in that royal composition Presbyterianism had been very roughly handled.

Elizabeth's mind was secular and political, so that religious questions had in themselves little or no interest for her, but James was a born theologian. From his childhood he had been devoted to the study of the Bible. He had written a paraphrase of the Book of Revelation. He had translated parts of the Psalter. His conversation savoured always of scriptural allusions and scriptural phrases. If Calvinism had not had Presbyterianism standing close behind it, he would have welcomed it with open arms. But he had seen far too much of Presbyterianism in Scotland, and its iron had entered too deeply into his soul, for him to be at all eager to renew acquaintance with it. A thorough-going Stuart in character, his belief in kingcraft and in divine right was as fervent as his belief in himself. He had all the Tudor wilfulness without any of the Tudor sagacity. He would not have forgotten that it was not very long ago that Andrew Melvil had dared to call him "God's silly vassal" to his face. An obsequious prelate was far more to his liking than a blunt kirk-minister, and absolutism than popular government. Now that he was no longer weak and helpless, he hailed the opportunity of trampling on his old tormentors and of inhaling the sweet-smelling incense of episcopal adulation. A wiser and a more far-seeing King would have made the most of the opportunity now offered him of throwing oil on the ecclesiastical waters

of discord, but unfortunately James was as short-sighted as he was foolish.

Such was the character of the man who summoned the Hampton Court Conference. The Petition of the malcontents, as has been remarked above, was silent on the subject of the English Bible. In point of fact the Calvinists would have been sufficiently content with the Genevan and the Anglicans with the Bishops' Bible. And it is a fact not without some significance that Dr Reynolds, the learned President of Corpus College, Oxford, and the spokesman of the moderate Puritans, did not even improvise his request for a fresh revision until well on in the second day of the meeting, by which time it had become obvious, if indeed any real doubt could have existed on the subject from the very beginning, that the Puritan representations would receive very scanty consideration. A useful sidelight is thrown upon the matter by the Preface to the Authorised Version. The translators there write as follows:—

"The very historical truth is, that upon the importunate petitions of the Puritans, the Conference at Hampton Court having been appointed for hearing their complaints, when by force of reason they were put from all other grounds, *they had recourse at the last to this shift*, that they could not with good conscience subscribe to the Communion Book (*i.e.*, the Prayer Book), since it maintained the Bible as it was there translated, which was, as they said, a most corrupted translation. And although this was judged to be but a very poor and empty shift, yet even hereupon did His Majesty begin to bethink himself of the good that might ensue by a new translation, and presently after gave orders for this translation which is now presented unto thee."

The instances of mis-translation which Reynolds

quoted were taken from the Great Bible and from the Bishops' Bible. In the current Genevan version the passages were correctly rendered. Presumably, therefore, the point which Reynolds wished to make was that either the maligned Genevan Bible, which was correct, ought to be given precedence over the official Bibles, which were incorrect, or else that there should be one more effort made in the field of translation. James is reported to have "professed that he could never yet see a Bible well translated in English, *but the worst of all his majesty thought the Geneva to be.*" Now the Dean of Chester, Dr Barlow, is our chief authority for what passed between the King and the Conference, and his account may probably be accepted as substantially correct. After a grumble from the Bishop of London that "if every man's humour should be followed there would be no end of translating," the Dean's narrative goes on in these words:—

"Whereupon his highness wished that some especial pains should be taken for one uniform translation, professing that he could never yet see a Bible well translated in English, but the worst of all his Majesty thought the Geneva to be, and this to be done by the best learned in both the universities, after them to be reviewed by the bishops and the chief learned of the church: from them to be presented to the Privy Council; and lastly to be ratified by his royal authority, and so this whole church to be bound unto it and none other. Marry withal he gave this caveat, upon a word cast out by my Lord of London, that no marginal notes should be added, having found in them which are annexed to the Geneva translation, *which he saw in a Bible given him by an English lady*, some notes very partial, untrue, seditious, and savouring too much of dangerous and traitorous conceits, supporting his opinion by Exod. i. 19, where the marginal note alloweth disobedience unto the King, and 2 Chron. xv. 16, where the note taxeth Asa for deposing his mother only and not killing her."

James's own idea of a Conference at which he was by way of playing the part of an impartial arbitrator, may fairly be gathered from the expression which he used in describing it to a friend in Scotland, and which is in full harmony with his favourite maxim of "no Bishop no King," "*I have kept a revel with the Puritans*," he writes, "*and have peppered them soundly*." An unguarded sentence which fell from one of the speakers, as to "district meetings" for the purpose of discussing ecclesiastical questions, seemed so suggestive of Presbyterian methods that it threw the royal president into a fury. "No," he cried, "for then Jack and Tom and Will and Dick shall meet and censure me and my Government. Stay, I pray you, Dr Reynolds, for one seven years before you ask that of me, and if then you find me pursy, and fat, and my windpipes stuffed, perhaps I will hearken unto you, for let that Government be once up I am sure I shall be kept in breath. Scottish Presbytery agreeth as well with monarchy as God and the Devil."

No wonder that the bishops were in ecstasies, and that Bancroft gave thanks to heaven upon his knees for "the singular mercy of such a King as, since Christ, the like had not been seen." But it is difficult to believe that, in one particular, James can have been rightly reported, for the really astonishing mendaciousness involved in the reference which is said to have been made by him to the Genevan Bible is such as to cause "credulity to hesitate, and fancy to stare aghast." Even for the King it must have required a strong effort to affect a merely incidental acquaint-

ance with a Bible with which, in point of fact, he had been only too painfully familiar ever since he was a boy, which had been preached into him every day for years and years, the text of which he had used for his own erudite expositions, a Bible, moreover, which had been printed in Scotland, and expressly dedicated to him not thirty years before. Indeed it was just because he knew this Genevan version so well that he had so strong a political aversion to it, and he can hardly have expected even the most servile of his courtiers to believe in his little story of the kind lady's present. Still we cannot but feel thankful for the happy chance through which the request put forward by Reynolds, possibly as a forlorn hope, was left to the decision not of the bishops but of the King, and of a King such as was James I. Had the Puritan been a past-master of diplomacy he could not have made a more skilful move. Except for the theological richness of the soil on which his Bible-seed happened by good fortune to fall, it seems more than likely that the last suggestion of the brow-beaten minority would have shared the fate of the Millenary Petition as a whole. And what that fate was appears plainly enough from the character of the Book of Canons of 1604, which embodied the practical reply of Church and Crown to the petitioners. Had so great a misfortune befallen our ancestors of the seventeenth century, England might have remained up to this very day distracted by the conflicting claims of rival versions of the Scriptures, and we might even now be calling out, in the spirit of the Corinthian converts of

St Paul, "I am of Tyndale," "I am of Coverdale," "I am of Geneva."

When the Conference was dismissed, no one could have had any idea that James intended to adopt a proposal which seems rather to have been extemporised as a happy thought than deliberately formulated as one of the articles of the Petition. But Reynold's request had fallen on no unwilling ear, and it laid hold at once upon the King's imagination. He well knew that in the last thirty or forty years substantial progress had been made in Greek and Hebrew scholarship. The notion of directing in his own royal person a great national enterprise such as the production of a translation, which, while surpassing all its predecessors in fidelity and in literary excellence, should also be freed from the disfigurement of undesirable annotations, was as gratifying both to his self-confidence and to his vanity as it was thoroughly congenial to his tastes. The business was not allowed to sleep. By the 22nd of July 1604, which is the date of his letter to Bancroft on the subject, all the main preliminaries appear to have been settled, and the scheme was fairly launched.

The first practical step had naturally been to select a competent committee of revisers. Most probably the King, whose whole heart was in the matter, consulted both Bancroft and the Universities, but to whom the ultimate decision was entrusted is uncertain. It is evident, from what is known of the names on the list which has come down to us, that all possible pains were taken to secure the services of the best available men.

The only qualification which was held to be indispensable was that the revisers should be Biblical students of proved capacity. Puritan Churchmen and Anglican Churchmen, linguists and theologians, laymen and divines, worked harmoniously side by side. Fifty-four of the most prominent scholars appear to have been originally selected to constitute the committee, but the lists that have come down to us include the names of only forty-seven. Why this was so we have no information, nor has any satisfactory explanation of the discrepancy been hitherto offered. What, however, is of more importance is that the appointments were in no case lightly made, but that the utmost care and catholicity of mind was exercised in the matter. To this statement there is, it must be admitted, one conspicuous exception. Hugh Broughton was probably the greatest Hebraist of the time, but he was a man of such ungovernable temper, and one so impossible to work with, that his co-operation was not invited.

The revisers were organised in six companies. Two of these held their meetings at Oxford, two at Cambridge, two at Westminster. The representative of the Puritans at Hampton Court, Dr Reynolds, one of the foremost scholars of the day, was on the Oxford committee, and among his colleagues was Dr Miles Smith, who "had Hebrew at his finger ends," and was, moreover, one of the final supervisors and the author of the very interesting and instructive preface which, though there is no room for it in our overcrowded Bibles, was prefixed to the completed work in 1611.

To each of the six companies a certain portion of the Bible was allotted to work upon. Their common basis was the Bishops' version of 1568. In respect of text, the revisers were practically no better off than the bishops. What is usually called the "Received" text, is, technically speaking, of later date, for in the case of the Old Testament that text is the edition of Van der Hooght, published in Amsterdam in 1705, and in the case of the New Testament the Elzevir edition of 1625. Still, to all intents and purposes, a text nearly identical with this "Received" text forms the basis of the Bishops' Bible.

In the absence of a standard edition of the Scriptures of the Old Testament there were at least three Hebrew Bibles to which reference could be made, without including either the great Rabbinical Bible of 1519 and 1525, or the Complutensian and Antwerp Polyglots. With regard to the New Testament, the companies appear not to have confined themselves exclusively to any one existing text, but to have made use of much the same materials as were accessible to Tyndale, and to have attached also great weight to the modifications which had been introduced by Beza into the texts of Erasmus and of Henry Stephens. In fact they consulted every version, whether English, Latin, French, Italian, German, or Spanish, which they found in circulation at the time, and were largely indebted to the Genevan Bible, to the Rheims New Testament, to Pagninus, Münster, and to the Trenellius-Junius translation of a somewhat later date.

The necessary preliminaries once arranged, the

next step was to provide for such expenses as were involved in the cost of travelling and of maintenance, and also for the remuneration of those serving on the committee. A code of instructions was at the same time drawn up for their guidance, explaining the main principles on which the revision was to be conducted. The raising of the money which was needed proved to be a task of considerable difficulty, and a source accordingly of vexatious delay. Gold was of much account in the palace of the English Solomon, and the demand for it persistently exceeded the supply. James was without doubt greatly interested in bringing to a successful issue the enterprise which he had initiated, but contributions towards it in cash were beyond him, and the response to his invitations for pecuniary support was unfortunately by no means cordial. Eventually the universities were directed to supply board and lodging for the committees located with them, private donations did something for those at Westminster, and for the most part the revisers found their ultimate reward in ecclesiastical preferment.

The instructions to which reference has been made appear on the whole to have been admirably conceived, and a copy of them was presented to each of the six companies. They ran as follows :—

1. The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishops' Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the truth of the original will admit.

2. The names of the prophets and the holy writers with the other names of the text, to be retained as nigh as may be, accordingly as they were vulgarly used.

3. The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, viz., the word *church* not to be translated *congregation*, etc.

4. When a word hath divers significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most ancient fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place and the analogy of the faith.

5. The division of the chapters to be altered either not at all or as little as may be, if necessity so require.

6. No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words which cannot, without some circumlocution, so briefly and fitly be expressed in the text.

7. Such quotations of places to be marginally set down as shall serve for the fit reference of one Scripture to another.

8. Every particular man of each company to take the same chapter or chapters: and having translated or amended them severally by himself where he thinketh good, all to meet together, confer what they have done, and agree for their parts what shall stand.

9. As any one company hath dispatched any one book in this manner, they shall send it to the rest to be considered of seriously and judiciously, for his Majesty is very careful in this point.

10. If any company, upon the review of the book so sent, doubt or differ upon any place, to send them word thereof, note the place, and withall send the reasons: to which if they consent not, the difference to be compounded at the general meeting, which is to be of the chief persons of each company at the end of the work.

11. When any place of special obscurity is doubted of, letters to be directed by authority to be sent to any learned man in the land for his judgment.

12. Letters to be sent from every bishop to the rest of his clergy, admonishing them of this translation in hand, and to move and charge as many as being skilful in the tongues, and having taken pains in that kind, to send his particular observations to the company either at Westminster, Cambridge, or Oxford.

13. The directors in each company to be the Deans of Westminster and Chester for that place, and the King's professors in Hebrew or Greek in either University.

14. These translations to be used when they agree better with

the text than the Bishops' Bible : Tindale's, Matthew's, Coverdale's, Whitchurch's,* Geneva.

15. Three or four of the most ancient and grave divines in either of the universities, not employed in translating, to be assigned by the Vice-Chancellor upon conference with the rest of the Heads to be overseers of the translations, as well Hebrew as Greek, for the better observation of the fourth rule above specified.

Thus each company, so soon as they had collectively completed their version of any one book out of the number of those for which they were responsible, would send a transcript of it to each of the other five companies for their independent criticism, so that every part of the work would go through the hands of the whole body of the revisers. Under this arrangement each individual translator would, to begin with, have made his own translation, and this translation would have been considered by the entire company to which he belonged. Having reached this stage, that particular company's suggested version would be passed on for the separate judgment of each of the other five companies, and the version, as thus amended, would come finally before the select committee of revision, for which provision was made in Rule 10.

How far the above rules were adhered to as a matter of fact we cannot tell. Almost all that is known as to the procedure in detail is confined to the statements made in the Preface,† a document which, but for its length, might well be printed in our Bibles with far greater edification for the reader than he is

* *I.e.*, the 1549 Folio reprint of the Great Bible.

† A reprint of this Preface can be procured for a nominal price from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

likely to derive from the servile "Dedication" which has been so carefully reproduced for his benefit.

It is evident from the code of instructions that the central principle of the undertaking, as in the case of the Genevan Bible, was the principle of organised co-operation. Only by such a method, combined with an interchange of completed work, can harmony, evenness, and unity of tone be even hoped for, and the special gifts of individual revisers be made to subserve the general purpose of the collective body. It is supposed that some three years were spent in arranging for the payment of expenses, in the individual study of the text, and in labours of an anticipatory character, three more in organised and joint work, and a brief nine months in a final revision in London by the representative committee of six, each of whom received as his remuneration thirty pounds from the Company of Stationers.

In 1611 the Authorised Version, a folio volume in black-letter type, was issued to the public. It had no notes, and the interpretation of it was therefore left perfectly free. The title-page speaks of the version as a "translation," and it bears the familiar words "appointed to be read in churches." But in point of fact the King's Bible is one of a long chain of *revisions*, and no evidence is forthcoming to show that any formal appointment as to its liturgical use was ever made whether by the King or by Parliament, by Convocation or the Privy Council. In any case none was necessary. Not by any means all at once, but gradually and slowly, this grand work took up

the position to which it was entitled by its intrinsic merits, a position from which, as the Bible of the people, it does not seem as yet likely to be dislodged.* Including what are called "portions" it has already been translated into something like four hundred different languages and dialects, and not less than three million copies of it are now year by year poured out from the English Press. In sober earnest may we say that "its sound has gone forth into all lands, and its words unto the ends of the world."

The revisers had indeed good reason to rejoice in the result of their labours. They had devised for the jewel entrusted to them a suitable setting, and had succeeded in giving to their Bible an excellence of form that was worthy of its substance. Avoiding both the euphuisms of the age before them, and the affected mannerisms of the age that was just beginning, they had now once and for ever rendered permanent that consecrated diction and phraseology, vigorous, popular, and idiomatic, which had come down to them by a long tradition, which had been in process of formation from Wycliffe onwards, and which Tyndale and Coverdale had adopted, cherished, and brought well nigh to perfection. They had clothed the sacred Scriptures in a language as appropriately distinctive to them as are the languages of philosophy, of medicine, and of law, and had made them to be an abiding anthology of what-

* The University Presses still sell, year by year, fully ten times as many copies of the Authorised as of the Revised Version. In 1899 Convocation authorised the use of the Revised Version in churches, and a folio edition has been published for the purpose.

ever is most beautiful in that Saxon inheritance of which we are all proud.

But this goodly company of scholars were at the same time well aware that though much had been done much would yet remain to do. They were the last men to claim finality for their work. The world does not stand still, nor did knowledge complete its course in the seventeenth century of our era. In point of sheer literary excellence it is indeed hardly conceivable that the Bible of 1611 will ever be surpassed, and it was accordingly on other lines that prospects of improvement were at a later date to open out. But to this aspect of the subject we shall return by-and-by in our next and concluding chapter. The description which has been given of the evolution of our Authorised Version may now perhaps best be completed by a consideration of the happy conjunction of circumstances to which its unique greatness is in part at any rate to be ascribed.

(1) In the first place, then, the King's Bible was indebted for its success to the personal qualifications of the revisers. They were the picked scholars and linguists of their day. They were also men of profound and unaffected piety. Let them speak for themselves.

"In what sort did these assemble? In the trust of their own knowledge, or of their sharpness of wit, or deepness of judgment? At no hand. They trusted in Him that hath the key of David, opening and no man shutting; they prayed to the Lord, O let Thy Scriptures be my pure delight; let me not be deceived in them, neither let me deceive by them. In this confidence and with this devotion did they assemble together."*

* The quotations are from the Preface to the Authorised Version.

They spared no pains to make their work as perfect as they could.

"Neither did we think (it) much to consult the translators or commentators, Chaldee, Hebrew, Syrian, Greek or Latin ; no, nor the Spanish, French, Italian, or Dutch ; neither did we disdain to revise that which we had done, *and to bring back to the anvil that which we had hammered.*"

They were not the slaves but the masters of the rules which had been framed for their guidance.

"Is the kingdom of God become words and syllables? Why should we be in bondage to them if we may be free?"

They never for a moment lost sight of the all-important fact that the English Bible must be a book not for an inner circle of trained scholars or theologians, but for the common people, and for ordinary men and ordinary women.

"We have, on the one side, avoided the scrupulosity of the Puritanes who leave the old ecclesiastical words, as when they put *washing* for *baptism*, and *congregation* instead of *church ;* as also on the other side we have shunned the obscurity of the Papists, that since they must needs translate the Bible, yet by the language thereof it may be kept from being understood. But *we* desire that the Scripture may be understood even of the very vulgar."

From this point of view the predominance of Saxon words in this verson is very remarkable. As compared with Latin words they actually constitute some nine-tenths of it. In Shakespeare the proportion is approximately eighty-five per cent., in Swift ninety, in Johnson seventy-five, in Gibbon seventy. In the Lord's Prayer no less than fifty-nine words out of sixty-five are of Saxon origin.

(2) Secondly, James's revisers felt themselves occupied in a great national undertaking, promoted with the utmost eagerness by the King himself, and supported by the full concurrence and approval of Church and State. It is scarcely necessary to invite attention to the contrast of such a position with the uphill struggles of a pioneer such as Tyndale, working in isolation as a lonely exile under the ban of the authorities, and in almost daily expectation of martyrdom.

(3) Thirdly, they had ready to hand the rich results of nearly a century of diligent and unintermittent labour in the field of Biblical study. The great lines which were to be followed had long since been marked out by Wycliffe, Tyndale, and Coverdale, while useful sidelights could be derived from the Latin and modern translations above enumerated. It is very essential to bear this consideration in mind if we are to take a just view of the literary style of our Authorised Version. For its diction goes back at least as far as Henry VIII. Those to whom it was entrusted were appointed not to translate "*de novo*" but to revise. And for this purpose they had before them the text of the Bishops' Bible, itself a revison of the Great Bible, which again, through "Matthew's" Bible, had been a revision of Tyndale and Coverdale.

"Truly we never thought to make a new translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one, but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones one principal good one."

If any one still feels a doubt on this matter we would invite him to do two things. Let him compare

the style of the Preface with the style of the Authorised Version, and then let him compare the latter with Tyndale's translation, say of the Gospels. He will probably be sufficiently satisfied that our Biblical phraseology was, in the main, the inheritance of the revisers and not their creation, and he will be ready to adopt their own explicit declaration when they affirm that the end at which they aimed was, that, out of the plenteous store of translations into various tongues, and out of the greatly enriched vocabulary at their command, they might "*make the good better.*"

(4) We pass on now to endeavour to indicate one further advantage which was enjoyed by the scholars and divines whose relation to their time it is so desirable that we should adequately appreciate, and which we may perhaps describe as a certain congeniality of religious climate. Their own sympathies were in perfect touch with the new-born religious enthusiasm that surrounded them. There is perhaps no better way of realising this subtle influence than through a mental comparison of our own age with theirs. Why is it, for example, that the great architects of the Middle Ages could design and build a Gothic Cathedral, while our latter-day architects cannot? Why is it that the faces which looked down on Fra Angelico have now withdrawn themselves from our sight? Why is it that we derive from the prayers and collects of Cranmer's translation an impression so totally different from that which is made upon our minds by the laboured and self-conscious efforts of our nineteenth century divines in their

occasional excursions into the field of devotional composition? If only we could formulate some adequate solution of these problems, we should have taken a long step towards the comprehension of the suggested contrast.

It is in any case a fact of history that the main interest of King James's age was as predominantly theological as the main interest of our age is predominantly scientific. "Theology rules there," Grotius wrote of England in 1613, and a like impression was recorded by the great scholar Casaubon after a brief visit to "the wisest fool in Christendom." The change was due to the extraordinary moral effect produced by the popularisation of the Bible, an effect which we see taking literary shape both in Milton and in Bunyan. Nor can it have escaped the observation of any one who takes an interest in his times that a corresponding change has long been developing itself with us owing to the popularisation of physical science. Then the civilisation of England was saturated with religion. Now it is saturated with evolution. Then it was, so to speak, face to face with the Creator. Now it is immersed in the study of His creation. Then every one talked and thought theology. Now every one talks and thinks science. We wear, for general purposes, the conventional garb of Christianity, and in our sympathetic instincts and humanitarian morals there breathes a true Christian spirit; but we take our dogmas, so far as we take any at all, rather from the pulpits of science than from those of theology; while between our everyday modes of thought, belief,

and expression, and those of an orthodox text-book, there would appear to be no inconsiderable a contrast. The reflex influences of this difference of intellectual habit must not be ignored even though they may defy any verbal definition. Revisers are as human as their fellow men, and consciously or unconsciously they become affected by the spirit of their age.

The religious movement to which we are inviting attention, as bearing upon the general mental temperament of the early seventeenth century, was soon to come into conflict with general culture through the development of a narrowing Puritanism. But the conflict had not yet begun. Far from being estranged the one from the other, religion and culture were as yet firm friends, and their friendship is well illustrated by the life and poetry of Milton. The movement dates back from the time when the Great Bible was first ordered to be set up in Churches.

"The whole moral effect," writes Green,* "which is produced nowadays by the religious newspaper, the tract, the essay, the lecture, the missionary report, the sermon, was then produced by the Bible alone . . . Sunday after Sunday, day after day, the crowds that gathered round Bonner's Bibles in the nave of St Paul's or the family group that hung on the words of the Geneva Bible in the devotional exercises at home, were leavened with a new literature. Legends and annals, war-song and psalm, state-rolls and biographies, the mighty voices of prophets, the parables of evangelists, stories of mission journeys, of perils by the sea and among the heathen, philosophic arguments, apocalyptic visions, all were flung broadcast over minds unoccupied by any rival learning."

Thus much, then, in explanation of the "religious

* *A Short History of the English People*, p. 449.

climate" whose sunshine streamed down on the King's translators, and made them to feel of good cheer.

(5) Full weight must also be given to the benefit which, as we have seen already, their enterprise derived from that organised system of co-operative work which had borne such good fruit in the Genevan Bible of 1560. The organisation no doubt fell short of perfection. It was a mistake, for instance, to divide the Books of the New Testament between the Oxford and Westminster Committees, and to reserve so short a time for the task of final revision. But all things considered, the plan was well conceived, and although the machinery might have been improved upon, it could never have completely eliminated the personal equation, the inherent inequality of men's mental endowments. While on the whole, therefore, our Bible is characterised above all preceding versions by unity of tone, it is not by any means an entirely homogeneous work, nor would any competent judge attempt to claim for the translation of the Epistles the same high standard of excellence which marks the translation of the Pentateuch, the Psalter, or the Prophets.

(6) There still remains one last consideration, last in sequence, but most assuredly not last in importance, to which we desire to devote a few words.

Regard has been had above both to the great intellectual eminence, and also to the devout earnestness and absorption in their task, which characterised the King's Committee; to their grasp of the full national significance of the work entrusted to them; to the richness of material and tradition which they inherited; to

the sympathetic religious temper of the times; and to the well-planned arrangements under which every part of the revision was executed, interchanged, and supervised. But above and around all this we have to remember the wonderfully stimulating power of the literary atmosphere which it was the great good fortune of our translators to breathe, an atmosphere which helped to nourish and to foster in them their lofty sense of style, and to inspire them with their marvellous sureness of artistic touch.

The last decade of the sixteenth century had witnessed an outburst of genius, whether in poetry, in the drama, or in prose, to which it would indeed be difficult to find a parallel. The names of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Spenser, Hooker, Chapman, Bacon, Jonson, Sidney, and, may we not add, of the author of a work which Froude has called "the prose epic of the modern English nation," Richard Hakluyt, form a galaxy of greatness before which we can only bow our heads. There had been long years of preparation. Beneath the surface of the entire Tudor period may be felt the pulsations of a widespread intellectual restlessness and fermentation which heralded the advent of an outpouring of creative inspiration that fairly takes away our breath. Throughout the reign of Elizabeth vast spiritual forces had been ceaselessly at work refashioning, transforming, fertilising the minds of men. For a while the black clouds of national peril overshadowed and shrouded their activity. But for a while only. Their hidden influence was not abated, and their agency continued operative. The intellectual force

of the Renaissance, the moral and religious force of the Reformation, the social and political force of a newly-realised and an ever-increasing sense of national unity and greatness, the economic force of rapidly expanding wealth, all these vitalising powers had been silently transfiguring the old England of Catholicism and Feudalism into the England that was to be. With the execution of Mary Stuart and the repulse of the Armada, the darkness rolled away. A terrible danger, nerving and bracing the whole community into strenuous effort, gave place all at once to an indescribable sense of relief. As it had been in Greece after Marathon, Platæa, and Salamis, so was it in this land of ours when the Spaniard spread his sails and fled away. Suddenly, almost as if by magic, the world of literature was seen bursting into loveliest blossom, and the national language clothing itself in strength, in richness, and in power. Not in one department of mental activity alone, but in every quarter, there arose a consciousness of quickened life and of boundless possibilities. The excitement, the hope, the buoyancy, the aspiration, the intensity of a nation renewing its youth, roused every faculty into a varied and many-sided alertness. It was in some such air as this that the translators of the King's Bible lived and moved and had their being.

And as the glory of those great years passed into their souls, so too did the inspiration of their originals distil itself into their pens, so that they were enabled to build up for their successors an English Bible, which, with all the imperfections which were inseparable from

the incompleteness of their critical resources and from the limitations of human nature, will always be held in veneration as our noblest literary memorial of a splendid and heroic age.

In the next and concluding chapter we shall proceed to consider the causes which made it necessary once more to return to the old work of revision, and we shall endeavour to render intelligible to ordinary readers the main features in the problem with which our revisers were confronted.

But before entering upon this last stage in our journey, it may be of advantage to cast a farewell glance over the thousand years which lie stretched between the crowning work of King James's reign and the first landing of the Italian mission on the shores of Kent.

Once again, then, let us lay stress upon the fact that the dominant feature in the external history of the English Bible is its essential nationality. It is because we are Englishmen that we feel the full power of its appeal. It is the close touch which its evolution has maintained with the national development and growth which gives to its annals their peculiarly distinctive character. Our conversion to Christianity we largely owe to the religious enthusiasm and the single-hearted self-devotion of the Celt. Where Rome had tried and failed, there Iona and Lindisfarne tried again and succeeded, so that while the mission of Augustine can only point to the permanent conversion of Kent, it is the glory of Aidan that he may claim to have converted England. Our ecclesiastical organisation,

discipline, and unity, we owe to the imperial genius of Rome.

> Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento :
> Hæ tibi erunt artes ; pacisque imponere morem,
> Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.

"Thine, O Roman, remember, to reign over every race ;
These be thine arts, thy glories, the ways of peace to proclaim,
Mercy to show to the fallen, the proud with battle to tame."
(*Æneid*, vi. 850. Bowen's Translation.)

But it is neither to Celt nor to Roman that we owe our national Bible. That is a gift which England received at the hands of her own children. Differing in this respect from the vernacular versions of the Continent, the English Bible is not the exclusive work of any one man, as the German Bible is the work of Luther, but the continuous growth of generations. Great as he is, Tyndale is but the foremost figure among a succession of men whose Biblical labours extend over nearly a hundred years, men whom the irresistible spell of the "Divine Library" has constrained into its loving service, men who were ready to lay down their life to give the Scriptures in their integrity to their fellow-countrymen. And, as one generation has handed on the torch to another, our Bible has continued to assimilate the intellectual progress of the nation. Its record is interwoven with our native instincts of independence, of freedom, of personal religion. It is the true child of our ancestral Teutonism, a genuine home growth, stamped on every page of its history with our indelible Saxon character.

Moreover, as we have endeavoured to show, this Bible carries us back, in its earliest origins, far beyond Tyndale and the Reformation era, since it was in Anglo-Saxon soil that it first took permanent root. If the Anglo-Saxon period is more fertile in fragmentary versions and paraphrases than the period of the Papal Supremacy, may it not be because the English Church then enjoyed a temporary spontaneity of development, a power of living her own life as the religious expression of the nation, which was lost to her when she had exchanged her liberty for tutelage, and had passed under the centralising and imperial influence of Rome? And as with the Saxon period so is it with the faint foreshadowings of a Saxon Bible. While Northumbria was the eye of England and her one centre of intellectual light, the saintly Abbess of Whitby, so happily named "Beacon Bay," made her religious house to be not merely a school of theology but the cradle of English literature. Here it was that, under the gentle guidance of the royal "Mother," as Hilda was affectionately called, the earliest of our poets was transformed from a cowherd into a prophet, and became the minstrel-herald of the Bible story. A few years later, and we find that the four Gospels and the Psalter have been rendered, by various hands, into the native language. The father of English History and of English Scholarship, the venerable Bede, is at the same time the oldest of our long line of Biblical translators. Under the leavening influence of Roman culture, Art steps in to pictorialise on the walls of the churches the great scenes of which Cædmon had sung to the homesteads of the hillside,

just as, at a later date, she was to dramatise them in Miracle-Plays for the enjoyment of the more centralised population of the towns. The most national of our English Kings, Alfred the Great, follows eagerly in the track of Bede and of Aldhelm. With the Norman Conquest there comes not merely a political but a religious change. Partly on account of the humiliation of the Saxon tongue, the popularisation of the Bible receives a sudden and prolonged check. The energies of the Latin Church concentrate themselves upon the necessary task of organisation and discipline, and the Scriptures seem hidden away behind the high altar of medieval sacerdotalism. Like the sea-god Glaucus in Plato's *Republic*, they become overlaid and incrusted with an accretion of tradition and legend that faithfully reflects the wonder-loving and superstitious temper of the times. The sacred Book, even in its Latin dress, only emerges to be stretched, like a prisoner condemned to the torture, on the pitiless rack of the scholastic logic. In the fourteenth century the instinct of nationality puts forth its strength, the long-repressed vitality of the native character and of the native tongue revives in Wycliffe, and for the first time in our history, the Latin Vulgate of the Church is confronted with an English Bible for the people. But Wycliffe was born before his time, and in the next century the returning wave all but submerges the premature religious revival, while, amid the clash of civil war, the chime of the church bells is drowned by the noise of drum and trumpet. At last there breaks upon the Western world the spring morning of the Renaissance,

and following close upon the steps of the "Humanists" the study of the Hebrew and Greek originals marks a new departure in the field of Scripture.

Then comes the Reformation, when, launched by Tyndale upon that angry sea, the English Bible and its fortunes are caught up at once into the eddying and shifting currents, and for a while all seems uncertainty. But, with the unforbidden circulation of the Coverdale version of 1535, the cause in whose support Tyndale was awaiting his death in Vilvorde prison is seen to be practically won. The martyr's dying prayer that the King of England's eyes might be opened now so far receives an answer that Henry's political Protestantism carries with it the authorisation, in 1537, of a people's Bible in the people's language. Version now follows version in quick succession, each taking its special colouring from the circumstances which gave it birth, until the great series is closed for many generations by that "monument more durable than brass," which, though we owe it to the idiosyncrasies of a Stuart King, reflects for us the full lustre of our Elizabethan literature.

After all, however, the Authorised Version was but the best of many revisions, and now, once more, after a reign of nearly nine generations, its capacity of assimilation has come to be tested afresh, and yet another version has appeared to link the Victorian era with the far-off centuries of Bede and of Alfred through the continuity of our national Bible.

"Nothing is begun and perfected at the same time, and the later thoughts are thought to be the wiser."

"Zeal to promote the common good, whether it be by devising anything ourselves, or revising that which hath been laboured by others, deserveth certainly much respect and esteem, but yet findeth but cold entertainment in the world . . . and if there be any hole left for cavil to enter (and cavil if it do not find a hole will make one), it is sure to be misconstrued and in danger to be condemned."

(*Pref. to Authorised Version.*)

"The real text of the sacred writers does not lie in any manuscript or edition, but is dispersed in them all. 'Tis competently exact in the worst MS. now extant, nor is one article of faith or moral precept either perverted or lost in them, choose as awkwardly as you will. . . . Make your 30,000 variations as many more . . . even put them into the hands of a knave or a fool, and yet with the most sinistrous and absurd choice he shall not so disguise Christianity but that every feature of it will still be the same."

Richard Bentley,
1713 A.D.

"In vitium ducit culpæ fuga si caret arte."

"The zeal to shun mistakes may, *if unchecked*
By love of art, beget a new defect."

HORACE—*Ars Poet.*

CHAPTER IX

THE WORK OF REVISION

It was pointed out* in the course of the last chapter that in the selection of scholars to serve on the King's Committee of Revision there had been one notable omission. The well-known name of Hugh Broughton had found no place in the list. In his resentment at what he considered a personal affront Broughton lost no time in attacking the new version with all the petulance of wounded vanity. "Tell His Majesty," he wrote, "that I had rather be rent in pieces with wild horses than any such translation, by my consent, should be urged on poor churches." Having thus passed summary sentence on the work of the Committee, he turned his anger on Archbishop Bancroft. In that pungent and would-be witty style which distinguished him, Broughton branded the Primate as the arch-offender among the whole company; and not obscurely intimated that, when his mortal race was run, this "bane of the banned croft"(!) would be found elsewhere than in heaven. The world, however, passed on its way undismayed; Broughton's consent was dis-

* Page 250.

pensed with; and the "poor churches" faced their biblical ordeal.

With the appearance of the King's Bible it was only natural that there should come a pause in the work which had been inaugurated by Tyndale in the preceding century. Scholarship had for a time spoken its last word. The strife of parties was rapidly being transferred from the religious to the political arena, and the Stuarts, by their fatuous attempt, under changed circumstances, to maintain the Tudor despotism without the Tudor tactfulness, were hurrying England along a path that could lead only to civil war. But though it is not in the ferment of the seventeenth century that we can expect to find anything like a continuous history of the English Bible, still even at this period its annals are not by any means a blank.

The Authorised Version, let us remember, had to begin by making its reputation against two keen competitors. On the one hand there was the Bishops' Bible, of which it was the revision, but which was not reprinted after 1606; and on the other hand there was the Genevan Bible, the Bible of home life, which was by far the more formidable rival of the two. Before a new translation could secure popularity on its own intrinsic merits, it was necessary that it should first win its way into circulation by attracting purchasers. With this view the last comer among the competing versions was made to appropriate and adopt something of the external appearance of the Bibles already familiar to the market. The figure, for ex-

ample, of Neptune with his trident and horses, was borrowed from the Bishops' Bible, while the general ornamentation of the title-page was borrowed from the Genevan Bible. Thus attractively equipped, the King's Bible started on its task of rivalry, but from the very first it was hampered by the deplorable carelessness of its printers, and it was only through its own excellence that, after a sharp struggle, it came out so completely victorious. Even the two earliest issues, namely, those of 1611, proved to be incorrect, and the so-called "he" and "she" Bibles derive their name from the fact that, in Ruth iii. 15, one edition reads, "and *he* went into the city," while the other has the variant "*she*." Passing to better-known examples, we may instance such unfortunate reprints as the "*Wicked*" Bible of King Charles' day, in which the seventh commandment stands bereft of its negative; a slip, by the way, for which Laud inflicted on the printers a fine of £300; the "*Vinegar*" Bible of 1717, where the heading to Luke, chap. xx., is given as "the parable of the *Vinegar*"; the "*Standing Fishes*" Bible; the "*Murderer's*" Bible; and the "*Ears to Ear*" Bible.

The King's Bible had been some forty years in circulation when, in 1653, the Long Parliament brought in a bill for a fresh revision. Various considerations had combined to induce the authorities to take this step. In part they were influenced by the fact that many blunders had already come to light in the printing, and that the new edition was accused in certain quarters both of numerous mistranslations, and also of "*speaking the prelatical language*." The proposal

aroused considerable interest, and in 1657 a sub-committee was appointed to take the matter practically in hand. Several meetings were held at the house of Lord Commissioner Whitelocke, the holder of the Great Seal, but the dissolution of the Parliament put an end to the matter before the committee had been able to report.

Among the members of this committee were Cudworth, the philosopher and theologian; and Bryan Walton, who was made Bishop of Chester at the Restoration. Walton's name is well known in the history of biblical criticism as having been the editor of a sumptuous Polyglot Bible, to the promotion of which Oliver Cromwell gave his cordial support. He was also, as we believe, the earliest among English scholars to call attention to the many discrepancies, originating in the oversights and blunders of copyists, which occur in the numerous MSS. of the Greek Scriptures.* The study of these "various readings," as they are usually called, belongs to the science of textual criticism, and it is the development of this branch of biblical study, whether through the discovery of fresh manuscripts, or through a more searching examination of the material already in existence, which has been mainly instrumental in bringing about a revision of the Authorised Version.

At the point which we have now reached it may be

* The arrival in England of the great Alexandrine Manuscript of the fifth century, which is now in the British Museum, and which was a present to Charles I. from the Patriarch of Constantinople, must doubtless have given a great impulse to textual study.

well to endeavour to picture to ourselves the general idea of the Bible which was in men's minds on the eve of the eighteenth century, and which had to be dislodged before philologists and critics could get a patient hearing.

The Reformation had placed in the hands of Protestants an English version of the Scriptures, based, as regards both testaments alike, on the traditional or "received" text. Having accomplished this it had stopped short. Calvin, it is true, had made himself responsible for the doctrine that these Scriptures "shone by their own light," and in this belief the Protestant world unhesitatingly acquiesced. To every Puritan his Bible was the immediate utterance of God. The modern conception of the sacred volume as a collection of books, the majority of which have a long literary history of editing and re-editing behind them; the idea that the characters and circumstances of the inspired penman should have been permitted to mingle with and to colour their several compositions;—would have been all but universally repudiated. From Genesis to Revelation the Bible was accepted as the miraculously preserved record of an inspiration whose operation extended to every word, and even to every letter, of the printed page. In the Hebrew original it was spoken of accordingly as the Hebrew "Verity," and in the Greek as the Greek "Verity."

In a sense, therefore, the Protestant had but exchanged one external authority for another. In the place of the medieval Church he had the Scriptures; in the place of an infallible institution an infallible

document; in the place of a tradition a printed book. The Puritan iconoclast had himself become a bibliolater; and on his self-interpreting book he now leaned with the whole weight of his religious nature.

But the scheme of compulsory godliness, for which Cromwell's Independents were responsible, had broken down in practice, and Puritanism, or rather its caricature, was being laughed out of court by Sir Hudibras. The world that surrounded those who accepted the theology of the Reformers was passing more and more under the sway of the intellectual influences set in motion by the regeneration of scientific method through the labours of Descartes, Bacon, and, after them, of Spinoza. For, what the Renaissance was to letters and to art; and what the Reformation was to religion; that the abandonment of tradition for experience was to the growth of science and to the development of knowledge. The Great Rebellion had its true counterpart in philosophy; and the revolt of the individual citizen against the divine right of kings found its analogue in the revolt of the individual reason against the divine right of authority. From this point of view, the foundation of the Royal Society in 1660, which may be said to have sprung from the "*Novum Organon*" of Bacon, was an event of no less significance, in its own field, than was the Petition of Right in the field of practical politics.

Under such circumstances it was inevitable that the spirit which, for want of a better name, we may call the spirit of Puritanism (though it was not confined to the Puritans), should sooner or later come into collision

with the spirit of criticism and science. At the Reformation there had been a moral and political insurrection against the Church of the Middle Ages. The eighteenth century was to see an insurrection against the authority of the book which had been put in its place, and of which, in the first days of a printed text, the earliest editions were held in almost superstitious veneration. Viewed under one of its aspects, Deism, which was so prominent a feature of the century in question, was a reaction against the narrowness of the creed with which the early Reformers rested satisfied. Admitting that Revelation had been recorded in a documentary form, what information, the Deists asked, could history and research give about the record? And what, too, had philology to say to it? The claims of the document should at least be presented at the bar of reason, so that it might be seen whether the historical foundations were strong enough to support the theological superstructure. It was by this line of attack that the prevalent rationalism of the age was brought to bear on the Protestant belief in the absolute self-sufficiency of the Bible, and that it served to stimulate in various quarters the philological study of literary origins.

We can now, perhaps, better appreciate the consternation that was caused in orthodox circles by the appearance of Bryan Walton's Polyglot, with its disquieting collection of "various readings," which the great Puritan Divine of his day, Dr John Owen, made the subject of his attack. To the Roman and to the Deist the new discovery was far from unwelcome.

For, to the Roman, these variants were only so much additional evidence that the Protestant book, speaking with a voice so indistinct and so uncertain, was in no position to make good its claim to independent authority, but required the Church to interpret it. To the Deist, on the other hand, they were a phenomenon to which he could triumphantly point as to something hopelessly inconsistent with the traditional and generally accepted belief in verbal inspiration. How, he asked, could it any longer be reasonably maintained that the record of Revelation, ever since the days of the original autographs, had been protected by Providence from the vicissitudes to which the history and tradition of other ancient manuscripts was known to have been universally subject?

Such being the effect produced, in opposite directions, by the publication of Walton's critical researches, it was not very long before matters came to a crisis. The appearance in the year 1707 of a new folio edition of the Greek Testament, by Dr John Mill, redoubled the alarm which had been excited by the Walton Polyglot a few years earlier. Mill had been at work upon this edition for fully thirty years, and the number of various readings which it exhibited mounted up to a total of not less than thirty thousand. The rationalists rose at once to the bait, and Anthony Collins, one of the deistical writers of the day, was not slow to avail himself of what seemed to be so favourable an opportunity for scoring an advantage over the orthodox party. In his "*Discourse of Free Thinking*" he accordingly made marked reference to this parade of discrepancies

in the manuscripts, as largely fortifying the position which, in common with his fellow controversialists, he himself was concerned to maintain. With no sufficient title of his own to fame, Collins would hardly have escaped oblivion had he not succeeded in bringing upon the field of controversy the greatest of English scholars, and the founder amongst us of that school of Hellenists to which Dawes and Porson subsequently belonged, Richard Bentley.

In his reply to the "Discourse," Bentley made it clear that the problem which was involved in textual criticism was not really a theological but a literary problem. He showed that, if the variants caused by the mistakes of scribes and copyists, who, after all, were but flesh and blood, were analysed as well as counted, by far the greater part of them would be seen to be wholly insignificant in their nature, and would leave the substantial correctness of the text of Holy Scripture practically unaffected.* Neither faith nor morals were in any danger, nor could a single doctrine or precept be proved to have been in any degree jeopardised or invalidated. So far, indeed, it may here be added, is a high total of various readings from forming any argument against the substantial purity of the parent text, that, the higher grows the total of variants, the more MSS. are thereby proved to have been collated, and

* In the Introduction to the Revised Text of the New Testament by Westcott and Hort (1881), it is estimated that "the amount of what can in any sense be called substantial variation can hardly form more than a thousandth part of the entire text." This would mean less than 200 words in the entire New Testament.

the broader, therefore, the inductive basis on which the general integrity of the record stands secured.

This is not the place to dwell on the great services which Bentley rendered to this branch of philology, or on those proposals for recovering a fourth century text of the New Testament which have added an additional lustre to his fame, though unfortunately he was never able to carry them out. It is enough for our immediate purpose to have recalled the name of the illustrious critic who did so much to pave the way for his successors in the field of textual research as applied to the Bible, and whose judgment on the merits of the contention raised by the "Discourse" has been already recorded on the page prefixed to the present chapter. Others have entered into his labours; and it is to Bengel, Griesbach, Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf, Hort, Scrivener, and the late Bishop of Durham, that we are mainly indebted for such progress as has been made towards a purer text than it was in the power of Erasmus and Beza, of Stephens and the Elzevirs, to arrive at.

We have been tempted to make this brief excursion into the long-forgotten controversies of an age "too proud to worship and too wise to feel," in order that we might thereby be enabled to indicate one of the main lines, namely, the line of textual criticism, along which biblical students have been steadily advancing during the long years that lie between us and the Reformation. Textual criticism, it should be said once for all, is an inductive science whose business it is to compare and weigh the evidence of ancient manuscripts, in order to

arrive at a text as nearly resembling that of the vanished autographs as may be possible.

We pass on now to a second department of biblical scholarship; the department, namely, of translations.

Next in importance to a pure text is a good translation of it. Different ages, however, have had different ideas as to the qualities in which excellence of this kind may be held to reside, and though opinions vary as to the merits of our latest revision, we may all unite in profound thankfulness that our English Bible has not been cast in any of the degenerate moulds which were at times designed for it during the last century. Numerous attempts were then made to improve the Authorised Version by modernising it in a variety of ways; but whether they were successful or otherwise the reader shall now have an opportunity of judging. Two specimens will probably be amply sufficient to satisfy any curiosity that we may have aroused, and we will select them in part from a "*New Testament*" published by Daniel Mace in 1729, and in part from a "*Literal Translation*" by Dr Harwood of Bristol in 1768. Let us first hear Mace:

"When ye fast don't put on a dismal air as the hypocrites do" (Matt. vi. 16).

"And the domestics slapt him on the cheeks" (Mark xiv. 65).

"If you should respectfully say to the suit of fine clothes, Sit you there, that's for quality . . ." (James ii. 3).

"The tongue is but a small part of the body, yet how grand are its pretentions! A spark of fire! What quantities of timber will it blow into a flame" (James iii. 5, 6).

This is bad, indeed, but there is yet worse behind. Dr Harwood may be described as a sort of Beau

Brummel among translators, and he works on an ambitious plan. It is his aim, he explains, "to diffuse over the sacred page the elegance of modern English" and with this aim he has perpetrated the following version of part of the "*Magnificat*":

"My soul with reverence adores my Creator, and all my faculties with transport join in celebrating the goodness of God, my Saviour, who hath in so signal a manner condescended to regard my poor and humble station."

Now that he has once yielded to the fascination of Harwood's scriptural style the reader may appreciate a few supplementary gems. They shall be taken from passages which we may assume to be universally familiar.

"A gentleman of splendid family and opulent fortune had two sons."

"We shall not all pay the common debt of nature, but we shall by a soft transition be changed from mortality to immortality."

"The daughter of Herodias . . . a young lady who danced with inimitable grace and elegance."

The late Bishop of Exeter, if our memory serves us rightly, once told a story of a certain sprightly young deacon, who, in preaching against the advocates of revision, startled his hearers by the contention that in the Authorised Version was good enough for St Paul it was good enough for him. If that deacon still lives we should like to present him with a copy of Dr Harwood's "*Magnificat*."

It would be unjust to infer that all the attempts of the eighteenth century in the field of translation were on the same low level, but at the same time it would

serve no good purpose to transfer any additional examples of them to these pages. If, however, any one should wish to see what measure of success can be attained in combining substantial accuracy with the charm of the old familiar diction, we would invite him to refer to a pioneer volume, entitled a "*Revision of the Gospel of St John, by Five Clergymen*," the first part of which came out in March 1857. The five contributors were Dr Barrow, Dr Moberly, Dean Alford, Mr Humphry, and Dr Ellicott. This volume was quickly followed up by a revision of the Pauline Epistles from the same able hands, and in 1869 by a complete revision of the New Testament, for which Dean Alford was alone responsible.

But, although no authoritative revision, whether of text or of translation, was put forward before the present century, individual scholars had not been idle, for private study is never seriously or permanently affected by the shifting course of political or religious events. While the Rationalist attacked the Puritan, and the Evangelical the Rationalist, and the Tractarian the Evangelical, much sound work was being done. No small part of such work was the bringing together and tabulation of critical material; the examination of many hundred Hebrew MSS. by Kennicott, De Rossi, Davidson, and others; and the publication of notes and commentaries on difficult passages. It is one thing, of course, to submit the conjectural emendations of an individual student to the judgment of contemporary scholars, and another thing to provide a substitute for the Authorised Version. It is one thing, in the seclusion

of the study, to clear up the meaning of a sacred writer and another thing to convey that meaning to the general reader in terms that skilfully conceal from him the fact that he is being presented with a new Bible. But nevertheless such private enterprise is of real and lasting value. Not to go further back than two generations, the critical labours of men like Lightfoot and Alford; Conybeare and Howson; Jowett and Stanley; Trench and the various contributors to the *Speaker's Commentary*, have done not a little to render smoother the path of the translators of a later day.

This much, then, by way of what has necessarily been confined to a rough sketch of the three principal fields in which the pioneers of revision had been more or less active since the reign of James I.; the fields, namely, of textual criticism, of translation, and of commentary.

Before we pass on to place before our readers the special circumstances under which revision, so long in the air, took a practical shape among us thirty years ago, it is desirable to point out that, in minor details, there had been a kind of unofficial revision going on with respect to the Authorised Version for many generations. The old passion for explanatory notes, for example, found vent in an edition printed in 1649 which revived the glosses of the Genevan Bible. The first edition to incorporate the chronology of Archbishop Ussher, and to fix the year 4004 B.C. as the date of the Creation, was Bishop Lloyd's Bible of 1701 (London). Again, the Cambridge Bible of 1762, by Dr Paris, and the Oxford Bible of 1769, by Dr Blayney

made very considerable changes. The chief modifications which they introduced were in the use of italics, in punctuation, in the number of marginal references, and, above all, in the number of marginal notes, of which latter Dr Paris added 383 and Dr Blayney 76, including many on weights and measures, and on coins.

When we reflect on this process of unnoticed and irresponsible revision, and also on the conspicuous advance, during the last three generations, in almost every branch of knowledge which could throw light upon questions of biblical scholarship, it may seem surprising that an authoritative revision should have been delayed so late as 1870. The interval between 1611 and 1870 is of course undeniably long if we take it as a whole; but directly we break it up and analyse it the matter begins to assume a different aspect.

Let us bear in mind, then, that to the troublous years of the Commonwealth there succeeded the conservative times of the Restoration. And if the first half of the eighteenth century was largely occupied with controversies such as that between Collins and Bentley, in the second half of it we can see that the centre of interest had shifted from religion to politics and economics. The great names that meet us, for example, after those of Hume and Butler, are the names of Burke and Adam Smith. A little later on the progressive spirit again received a sudden check through the intellectual reaction which followed the excesses of the French Revolution. Thus it was not until the nineteenth century was well on its way that England began to throw off her religious drowsiness, and that biblical

criticism was once more encouraged to raise its head. From that time onward, however, there has been no considerable relapse,* and our sluggish insular consciousness has shown increasing symptoms of the literary and scientific influences which found their way from Germany into our midst through the philosophy of Coleridge, and through the preaching of Carlyle.

But be this how it may, there is no question that a powerful impulse was given to the cause of revision by the appearance, about the middle of the present century, of the critical texts of the New Testament published by Tischendorf, and by our own countryman, Tregelles; and, again, by the startling discovery of yet another very ancient manuscript of the entire Scriptures. This manuscript, now known as the Codex Sinaiticus, is a splendid Uncial of the fourth century, and was found in the monastery of St Catherine, on Mount Sinai. Forty-three leaves of the Old Testament were rescued from the wastepaper basket by the keen eyes of Tischendorf in 1844, and were presented by him to King Frederick of Saxony, who deposited them in the Court Library at Leipzig. But the monks in the meantime had taken alarm, and it was not until 1859 that the steward of the monastery produced, out of his private room, a mass of loose leaves wrapped in a cloth, which turned out to include the whole of the New Testament, and 156 additional pages of the Old.

The Church authorities in England now began to

* In 1858 appeared "*The Authorised Version of the Bible*" (Trench); and in 1876 "*On a Fresh Revision of the English New Testament*" (Lightfoot).

bestir themselves in sober earnest; and, shortly after the publication of Dean Alford's New Testament, the then Bishop of Winchester, Samuel Wilberforce, sounded the Prime Minister, Mr Gladstone, as to the appointment of a Royal Commission, with a view to a complete revision of the Authorised Version. The political difficulties to be surmounted were, however, found to be too great, and accordingly in February 1870 Bishop Wilberforce brought the subject under the notice of the Convocation of Canterbury. A Committee of both houses of the Southern Province was consequently formed, and directed to make a report, which they did in the following May. The Convocation of York was of opinion that the proposed revision was still premature, and accordingly the Northern Province continued to stand aloof.

The report of the joint Committee having been adopted, it was next resolved that two companies should be formed, each consisting of twenty-seven members, the one to undertake the revision in respect of the Old Testament, and the other in respect of the New. It was decided also that the invitations to the leading scholars of the United Kingdom should include Nonconformists as well as members of the Established Church. Furthermore, the Convocation sought to obtain the co-operation of the churches of America, and in due course two companies, corresponding to those in England, were organised across the water, and both sets of revisers remained in close touch with each other throughout the course of their labours.

The resolution passed by the Convocation of Canter-

bury, in February 1870, limited the forthcoming alterations, whether in the Hebrew and Greek texts, or in the translation of them, to "*passages where plain and clear errors should, on due investigation, be found to exist.*" The Committee also agreed to the following rules among others :

(1) As few alterations to be made in the text as should be found consistent with faithfulness.

(2) The expression of such alterations to be confined, as far as possible, to the language of the Authorised and earlier English Versions.

(3) The text adopted to be that for which the evidence *decidedly preponderated*, and all alterations of the traditional text to be indicated in the margin.

(This last rule, however, it was found impossible to carry out, for reasons explained by the revisers in their Preface.)

(4) Each Company to go over their work twice. The decision in the first, or provisional, revision to be by simple majorities; and in the final revision by *a majority of not less than two-thirds* of those present.

Since a good deal of stress has been laid on this rule of a two-thirds majority, as practically safe-guarding the text from ill-considered changes, we shall venture a few words on the subject. It may be questioned whether the rule is quite so sound as it looks. It would undoubtedly be so if there were as many good textual critics present, at any given sitting, as there were good scholars. But any one who has served on committees is aware of the predominating influence of the expert, and we are all familiar with the maxim,

"*Cuique in suâ arte credendum.*" Take such a case, for example, as that of a library committee, debating as to the purchase of some special and technical book which may recently have been published. It is very possible that the final vote of the committee will be unanimous, but the decision will really have rested all the while with its expert members. Those who are conscious of knowing less will gladly have been guided by those who are admitted to know more. Whether this was so among the revisers we cannot say. But that it may have been so is far from unlikely.

Inasmuch as the Prefaces to the Revised Versions are readily accessible to all, it is unnecessary here to go into further detail as to the rules laid down by Convocation and by its committee. Substantially they come to this, that the revisers were not to alter the Authorised Version more than was really essential in order to bring it into harmony with admitted facts. A few incidental points of general interest may, however, be briefly touched upon. The expenses of the undertaking were duly provided for in the sale of the copyright to the Universities. The marginal references of the Authorised Version temporarily disappeared; but they were subjected to a careful examination, and a new edition of the Revised Version has quite recently been published both in England and in America in which these references, duly revised, again form a conspicuous feature. The Old Testament Company spent fourteen years, and the New Testament Company ten years, over their work, the former having held nearly 800 sittings, and the latter nearly 400. Two editions of the Greek Testa-

ment have been published by the Universities in order to show what changes have been adopted in the text. The Oxford edition places the changes in the body of the text, and the discarded readings in the foot-notes; while in the Cambridge edition this process is reversed.

If we now proceed to compare the position occupied by the revisers of 1870, sitting in the Jerusalem Chamber at Westminster, with that of their predecessors in the seventeenth century, the contrast will be found interesting and instructive.

The committee appointed by King James were instructed to work on the text of a Bible which was not yet forty years old, namely, the Bishops' Version of 1568.

Our revisers, on the other hand, were called upon to work on a text which had been current for a period actually longer than the entire interval which divides Wycliffe from the first of the Stuarts.

Again, while the Bishops' Bible had never been a success, the Authorised Version had for more than two centuries been almost a household word.

To complete the contrast, the Bishops' Bible had circulated side by side with its rivals, and among a comparatively small public, of whom the majority were unable to read. King James' Bible had circulated, supreme and peerless, among an educated public dispersed all over the English-speaking world. As years went by it had taken deeper and wider root in English literature. Week by week it had been preached and read aloud in the ears of millions and tens of millions.

The Prayer Book, by adopting its renderings, had re-echoed it in the Gospels, Epistles, and occasional services of our Liturgy. Private study and private devotion had for generations known no other Bible. From the English press more than three million copies had long been pouring out year after year. Since its foundation in 1804 the British and Foreign Society has up to the present time distributed an aggregate (of complete Bibles and of portions) which mounts up to the astonishing total of close upon seventy millions.

In the face of such facts as these it is sufficiently apparent that a reviser of yesterday finds himself confronted with a task far graver than that which lay before the reviser of three centuries ago. The responsibility and difficulty of retouching so unique a masterpiece, of drawing the line between essentials and non-essentials, and of making corresponding changes in a book which has long since taken a whole people captive by its beauty, can hardly be exaggerated.

Whatever, therefore, may be the ultimate verdict of a later generation upon labours which are even now too recent to be fairly judged, the barest honesty makes it only fitting that these difficulties and these responsibilities should, in the meantime, be freely and frankly recognised.

The work entrusted to the revisers of 1870 falls into two natural divisions, namely, the revision of the text from which the Bible of 1611 had been translated, and the revision of the translation itself. It is plain, that, before there can be an agreement as to what

English words best represent the Hebrew and Greek texts, there must be a prior agreement as to what those Hebrew and Greek texts themselves are. But at this point a difficulty at once arises. A critical knowledge of manuscripts is one thing, and a gift for translation is another thing. It is probably an understatement of the case to say that, where twenty scholars could be named capable of giving us a trustworthy translation, it would be hard to name two out of the number who would also be capable of giving us a trustworthy text. Textual criticism is a science which can hardly be mastered in less than a lifetime, and the number of those in England who, in 1870, had more or less exhausted all that it had to teach might be counted on the fingers of one hand.

The conditions of the problem, let us add, were not by any means the same for the Old Testament as for the New. In the case of the Old Testament, the revisers had practically no choice left to them. Adequate materials for revising, with any confidence, the traditional, or Massoretic, text are not yet in existence. This can only be done by the help of the ancient Versions, and the text of these Versions themselves leaves very much to be desired. Although no Hebrew manuscripts have survived that are of earlier date than the ninth century, still this traditional text can be traced back as far as the first century. That it has been preserved with the most scrupulous care since the destruction of Jerusalem is not, we believe, open to serious question. But before that time, from the eighth century B.C. onwards, the history of the

consonantal text, which in the early centuries of the Christian era was vocalised by the Rabbis for reading aloud in the Synagogue, is involved in much obscurity. It appears certain, however, that the MSS. which were before the translators of the Hebrew Scriptures into the Greek Septuagint, for the use of the Greek-speaking Jews of Alexandria in the third century B.C., were not in anything like complete agreement with the MSS. from which the Scribes of the first century A.D. made their selection out of the Temple archives with the view of permanently fixing a standard text. "The age and authorship of the books of the Old Testament," writes Professor Driver, "can be determined (so far as this is possible) only upon the basis of the internal evidence supplied by the books themselves; no external evidence worthy of credit exists."* "The state of knowledge on the subject," say the revisers in the Preface to their Revision, "is not at present such as to justify any attempt at an entire reconstruction of the text, on the authority of the Versions." This being so, and there being no other authority available, but one course was left to them. With here and there a few exceptions, they were compelled to adopt the Massoretic text.

But the conditions in respect of the New Testament are altogether different. In spite of the imposing total to which variants of greater or less importance have mounted up, the substantial integrity of the text is here supported by a mass of evidence which is absolutely

* Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament: Second Edition, p. xxxv.

overwhelming,* and of this evidence the greater portion has been brought into existence since the date of the Authorised Version. No Greek or Roman classic can boast of anything at all approaching so secure a literary foundation as the Bible, and the same remark applies with even greater emphasis to the text of Shakespeare, which is full of doubts and difficulties. But there is at least one feature that is common to the Old and New Testaments alike, and that is, that in both cases the original autographs have long since vanished. For those who do not believe in any providential government of the world this loss will have no more significance than would be admitted in the case of any other like literary mishap. It is otherwise, however, for those who do so believe. To speculate upon what Providence *might* have done is doubtless a mere waste of time, but it is instructive to reflect upon the facts of history. If the survival of the actual words of the sacred writers had been essential to the cause of religion, it is reasonable to suppose that they would have survived. If they have been permitted to perish, it would seem that what is really essential

* The MSS. of the New Testament, including Uncials and Cursives, number about two thousand. The most valuable Uncials are :—

(1) The Codex Sinaiticus, 4th century, in the Library of St Petersburg.

(2) The Codex Vaticanus, 4th century, in the Vatican Library.

(3) The Codex Alexandrinus, 5th century, in the British Museum.

(4) The Palimpsest of Ephraem Syrus, 5th century, in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

(5) Codex Bezæ, 6th century, at Cambridge.

The most important Versions are :—

(1) The Latin. (2) The Syriac. (3) The Egyptian.

is not the earthen vessel, but the treasure that it contained; not the form, but the matter; not the letter, but the spirit and the substance. Textual critics have still much work before them. The collation of all important manuscripts has to be completed; the Versions have to be critically edited, and their languages to become the common property of scholars; the works of the Fathers need both correctly printing and adequately indexing; the evidence of the Lectionaries has still to be exhausted, and the Synoptical problem yet awaits solution. And even then the most, we presume, that research can hope to do, is to get back to within something like a distance of two or three generations from the originals, either through a harmony between the Old Latin and the Old Syriac Versions, which are some two centuries older than the most ancient of our uncial manuscripts, or by some other means. But, assuming that this desirable stage of progress may eventually be reached, all variants will not even then have been eliminated, seeing that as soon as the original manuscripts began to be copied, a variety in the readings, whether conscious or unconscious, unintentional or deliberate, began to occur. And in addition to this there is the admitted fact that critics are not yet agreed as to whether our Gospels in their present shape can, in the strict sense of the term, be said to have had autograph originals at all, or whether, again, there was not more than one genuine edition of the book of "Acts" during the lifetime of its author. These being the general circumstances of the case, the course which our revisers thought it wisest to adopt was practically to pin their faith to a provisional and tentative

text which had been supplied to them in advance. This text, as is well known, was the outcome of the labours of two of the highest authorities of the day, namely, the late Dr Hort and the late Bishop of Durham, though it had not secured the unreserved support of a fellow-student of equal or even of higher critical attainments, Dr Scrivener.

For the casual layman to pose as a competent judge of the merits or demerits of this text would be transparently ridiculous. It is necessary, however, to refer to its existence because a very large proportion of the opposition with which the Revised New Testament has been met is due to the official endorsement of the text in question by the revisers, in their collective capacity, without any previous and experimental circulation of it for general criticism. To a mind which has no prejudices on the subject, either in one direction or in another, it seems clear that in thus accepting a text which introduces some six thousand new readings, and which certainly therefore cannot be accused of erring on the side of timidity, the Committee would appear to have lost sight of the instructions given to them by Convocation, viz., "to introduce *as few alterations as possible*" into the text of the Authorised Version. And not only so, but they can hardly have taken into sufficient account the fact that their Revision was intended to take the place of the Authorised Version as the people's Bible, and was not intended merely for scholars who had the means of judging more or less for themselves, and who at any rate were cognisant of the general nature of the problems underlying the Revision. Under such con-

ditions they would perhaps better have served their purpose if, in all cases where the traditional reading could give a respectable account of itself, though some reasonable doubt existed, they had offered to the innate conservatism of the English temperament in respect of the Authorised Version the temporary benefit of that doubt, and had, accordingly, made not the *maximum* but the *minimum* of change. Every one, for example, would have been glad of the disappearance from 1 John v. of the spurious text about the three witnesses; or of such improvements as the substitution in Rev. xxii. 14 of "they that wash their robes" for "they that do His commandments"; while, on the other hand, of certain violent changes in the first three Gospels, the necessity for which is not beyond dispute, it is not every one who will be glad.

Closely connected with the subject of the text is the subject of the margin. And here again it is desirable to bear in mind that we are not dealing with a book written by scholars for scholars, but with the English Bible revised for the use of all English-speaking people. From this homely point of view it is impossible to praise the practice which has been adopted of bewildering ordinary folk by leaving them to infer that they are at liberty to make their choice between two or three or four "ancient authorities,"—authorities about which they know just nothing whatever. Frankness and conscientiousness are very admirable qualities, and if a reading is in fact uncertain, no one would contend that readers should be presented with a *suggestio falsi*, or that the text should be vouched for as if it were certain.

But what should we think, if, when we consulted our experts—our lawyer, let us say, or our doctor—the one were to leave us staring at a variety of prescriptions, each of which, as he informed us, had at some time been known to heal some one somewhere of his sickness; or if the other, in his anxiety to brace us with his professional advice, were to add, as an audible aside, that many ancient solicitors held quite a different opinion, and that he was not prepared to contradict them?

Mere literary laymen, and still more, the unlettered men and women who, for various reasons, are in the habit of reading what they can understand, and feel thankful for, and enjoy, in their Bibles, desire to look up to their reviser as to an expert. Such persons do not, of course, expect infallibility. That is a gift which, as we are all by this time aware, is not to be found outside the Vatican. But they do wish to know what those who have thoroughly studied the matter think to be most probable, and with this they are prepared to rest content. To throw three or four different readings at their heads, and to bid them go away and choose for themselves, is to cause them unnecessary irritation, and where they asked for bread to give them a stone.

We pass now from the text which forms the basis of the Revised Version, and from the unsuitability, for the purposes of a popular Bible, of a margin one function of which seems to be to register the conjectures of critics, briefly to notice and illustrate the several classes of defects, other than wrong readings, which were admitted on all hands to exist whether

in the Old or in the New Testament of the Bible of 1611.

As our readers are aware, it is no part of the plan of this book to go into any detail on points of criticism, but we may make a rough classification of these defects under the following heads, which we will take in sequence.

1. Mis-translations.
2. Ambiguous, inexact, or inadequate, renderings.
3. The use of terms now become obsolete.
4. Obscurities of phrase.
5. Gratuitously inconsistent renderings of the same Greek word to the detriment of the force and meaning of the original.
6. Renderings which are offensive to modern taste, and which, whether in the family circle or elsewhere, are a practical hindrance to the reading of certain portions of the Bible aloud. On these, however, it is unnecessary to dwell further.

(1) Mis-translations.

As an example of wrong translation we may instance the First Lesson appointed to be read on Christmas day, which is taken from Isaiah, chap. ix. The prophet, it will be remembered, is contrasting the future of those who walk according to the law with the future of those who despise it, and who "shall look unto the earth, and behold distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish." Nevertheless, he proceeds :—

Authorised Version.	*Revised Version.*
1. Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.	But there shall be no gloom to her that was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time hath he made it glorious, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations.
2. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.	The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death upon them hath the light shined.
3. Thou hast multiplied the nation and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy of harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.	Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased their joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.
4. For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.	For the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast broken as in the day of Midian.
5. For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.	For all the armour of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood shall even be for burning, for fuel of fire.
"Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath."—Psalm lviii. 9.	"Before your pots can feel the thorns he shall take them away with a whirlwind, the green and the burning alike."

Authorised Version.	*Revised Version.*
"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."—John x. 16.	"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; *and they shall become one flock, one shepherd.*"
"Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious."—Acts xvii. 22.	"And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said, Ye men of Athens in all things I perceive that ye are somewhat superstitious" (margin, or, religious).

With regard to the last quotation the revisers do not appear to have much improved upon their predecessors. We always supposed the point to be that the earlier translators had, unnecessarily, caused St Paul, among whose characteristics were his courtesy and his delicacy of feeling, to begin an important address,—and an address, moreover, delivered to an audience not deficient in self-esteem,—with a breach of good manners; so that the better sense would perhaps be neither "too superstitious," nor yet "somewhat superstitious," but "more than ordinarily devout."*

* The term in the original Greek means "fearing the gods." Xenophon frequently uses it, in the good sense, as equivalent to "religious," and it is found, too, several times so used in Josephus.

(2) AMBIGUOUS, INEXACT, OR INADEQUATE RENDERINGS—

Authorised Version.	*Revised Version.*
"Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness."—Luke xvi. 9.	"Make to yourselves friends *by means of* the mammon of unrighteousness."
"And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age."—Luke iii. 23.	"And Jesus himself, when he began *to teach*, was about thirty years of age."
"And when they had taken up the anchors they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands."—Acts xxvii. 40.	"And casting off the anchors, they left them in the sea, at the same time loosing the bands of the rudders."
"He hardened Pharaoh's heart."—Exod. vii. 13.	"Pharaoh's heart was hardened."
"I know nothing by myself."—Cor. iv. 4.	"I know nothing *against* myself."

(3) THE USE OF TERMS NOW BECOME OBSOLETE.

Under this head come such words as "habergeon," "wimples," "artillery" (*i.e.* arrows), "knops," "ouches," "taches," "bosses," "ambassage," "bolled," "lewd" (*i.e.* unlearned), "worship" (*i.e.* honour), and many others. The foregoing will, however, suffice as illustrations, and it is easy for any one to fill up the list for himself.

(4) OBSCURITIES OF PHRASE.

In this class may properly be included such Hebraisms as "*a covenant of salt*" (a friendly agree-

ment), "*cleanness of teeth*" (a famine), "*branch and rush*" (highest and lowest), "*rising early*" (acting with energy); or such Latinisms as "*prevent*" (go in front in order to assist), "*damnation*" (judgment), "*publican*" (tax-gatherer), "*creature*" (any created thing, whether animate or not).

(5) Gratuitously inconsistent renderings of the same Greek word.

In this class of defective renderings we come face to face with a deliberate conflict of principle. The translators of 1611 admonish the reader in their Preface that "we have not tyed ourselves to an uniformity of phrasing, or to an identity of words." But a too rigid uniformity is one thing and a capricious love of variety is another, and it is difficult to understand why when the same Greek term is repeated in the original it should not, as a rule, be repeated in the translation; why, for example, that which is a "letter" in Acts xxiii., xxv., should become an "epistle" eight verses later, or why what is the good old Saxon "truth" in 1 Tim. ii. 7, should become the Latin "verity" later on in the self-same verse. It is needless to say more under this head, for the improvements introduced by the revisers pervade their whole work and meet us at every turn.

Such, then, we believe to be fairly representative instances of the imperfections which experience had long since brought to light in the Authorised Version, and we ought to add to them certain grammatical inaccuracies in the rendering of the Greek article, tenses,

cases, particles, prepositions, and the like, which are too general to need illustration.

These flaws were mainly due to two unavoidable disadvantages which attached to the revision of the seventeenth century. The first of these disadvantages was that King James's scholars learnt their Greek through grammars and lexicons which expressed themselves not in English but in Latin. They were accustomed, in other words, to a language which lacks the richness and the inflexions of the Greek, and which can boast of neither a definite article nor an aorist. Their second disadvantage was that the Greek with which they were most familiar was classical and not Hellenistic Greek. There is, we need hardly say, all the difference in the world between the Greek of Sophocles and Plato, and the Greek of the New Testament, or of the Septuagint. The one is a native growth; the natural speech of the wonderful people who brought their language to such perfection. The other is that "common dialect" of everyday life, which was in use, with many local varieties, throughout the kingdoms which sprang up out of Alexander's conquests; a dialect which ministered to the literary needs of the many-coloured civilisation for whose external history the Roman Empire had prepared the framework. Greek it is, but a degenerate Greek, standing midway between the Greek of the LXX. and the Greek of the early Fathers; and largely moulded by the Hebrew genius on the one side, and by Christian ideas and thoughts on the other. The only fragment of the New Testament which can be said to recall the Greek of the classical age is the brief

introduction to the third Gospel which has been given us by St Luke. The Jew of the first century thought in Hebrew though he wrote in Greek; and the whole cast of his mind was as different from that of a Greek of the days of Pericles as Asia Minor and Palestine were themselves different from Greece. If due weight be given to this twofold drawback under which the translators of 1611 were forced by circumstances to work, it will not excite any surprise that their successors of 1870 should have felt it no unimportant part of their duty to bring the grammar of the new version more into harmony with the lights and shades of their Hellenistic original than would have been possible two or three centuries ago.

No one, we imagine, will quarrel with them for thus endeavouring to strengthen what was one of the weakest points in the armour of their predecessors. And in order to judge what measure of success they have obtained, the fairest way is to read several chapters consecutively, side by side both with the Authorised Version and with the Greek. Tried by this test the impression left upon our own mind is that our revisers have attempted far too much. It may readily be admitted that they know Greek, and more especially Hellenistic Greek, better than it was known by King James's Committee; but that Committee were most assuredly their masters in Scriptural English, and were very jealous withal of the native idiom.

Our old English Bible has come down to us redolent, as it were, of the springtime of our language. Our new one has hanging about it a suspicion of the midnight

lamp. Why should it not be enough if a translation can be made to convey the meaning of the original framed in the idiomatic manner and usage of the translator's own tongue? Neither Chapman's "*Homer*," nor Frere's "*Aristophanes*," nor Worsley's "*Odyssey*," nor Jowett's "*Plato*," are literal translations, but they recall their originals much more vividly than if they were. Why force English into a mechanical imitation of Greek instead of leaving it in all the attractiveness of its native colouring? We shall be slow to believe that either this or any future Revision will take the place of the Authorised Version, as the popular and home Bible, so long as it concentrates so much of its strength in the aim at what strikes us as an over-refined accuracy, and forgets that one great secret of the success of its forerunner was the music of its cadences and the magic of its literary charm.

It was intended not for scholars only, but for every one who could read, and it was intended, moreover, to bear reading aloud. It may have failed, it doubtless has failed, in exactly reproducing the niceties of Greek grammar and syntax, but for all that it won, and it has maintained, a permanent place in England's heart as the greatest of her classics. And are we really the losers by its lesser grammatical blemishes? The Founder of our religion left no writings behind Him, and even His reported sayings have come to us not in their original Aramaic but in Greek. But, passing downwards from Jesus Christ, is there any indication in either the prophets, or the evangelists, or the apostles,

that they attached a vital importance, not merely to the turn of their every phrase, but to every mood, and to every tense, and to every particle? It is not, surely, the impression which is given us by St Paul, whose amanuensis must often have been sore put to it to keep pace with the surging torrent of the Apostle's eloquence when under the stress of strong emotion. Nor is it what we gather from the story of Jeremiah's roll of prophecies, which, after some twenty or thirty years from their delivery, he had committed to writing, and which King Jehoiakim in his anger cut up into shreds and burnt. For so far was the prophet from regarding the loss as irreparable, or the precise wording of his message from having any mystical value attaching to it, that he dictated a fresh version to Baruch, his scribe, or private secretary, and added to his new edition "many like words."

It must be freely admitted that the exact degree of faithfulness which best befits a translation of the Bible is a subject on which there is much to be said, and to be said, moreover, from more than one point of view. Our revisers, therefore, are at least as fully entitled to their own convictions on the matter as are the less erudite readers of their version. For our own part, however, we cannot help wishing that they had adhered more conscientiously to the unambiguous instructions of Convocation as to the avoidance of all "unnecessary" changes.

For there seems to be a very widespread feeling abroad that many changes have been made by them which were not really necessary at all. Let us

justify this feeling by a few out of a whole multitude of available examples. Was it necessary in Gen. ii. 2 to read "finished" for "ended"; or "rule" for "reign" in Judges ix. 2; or "unto" for "to"; or "Isaiah the prophet," for "the prophet Esaias"; or "He findeth first," for "He first findeth"; or to make the war-horse in the Book of Job snort "Aha" instead of "Ha ha," Job xxxix. 25? For what reason is "thrown down" better than "cast down" in Luke iv. 29; or "fastening their eyes," than "looking steadfastly" in Acts vi. 15; or "*the* lust," "*the* sin," than "lust," "sin," in James i. 15; or "love" than "charity" in the famous passage in St Paul?

But it is easy enough for any one to make extracts to suit his own arguments and his own views. The fairer way, as was before remarked, is to read out loud some considerable portion of the Revision as a continuous whole, and to compare it carefully with the Authorised Version, *bearing always in mind the rule laid down by Convocation that nothing was to be altered unnecessarily.* If the result of this experiment be to satisfy the reader that the rule has been conscientiously observed we shall be much surprised.

Thus much we have ventured to say, respecting the claim of the Revised Version to take the place of King James's Edition as a Bible for the people. But our remarks have little or no application to it as a new critical work for a certain class of readers. As a companion Bible to the one to which we are accustomed;—as a scholar's Bible;—as a helpful book of reference,—it deserves, as it seems to us, almost all the praise that

can be given to it. To what extent the new readings in the text will be recognised as good and sound fifty years hence, we have not the technical knowledge on which to base a judgment. But it requires no technical knowledge to appreciate so long-deferred a boon, to take the first modification which occurs to us, as the division of the text into paragraphs. For the old division into chapters and verses,* however useful the one may be for liturgical purposes, or the other as a way of notching the printed matter so as to square with this or that concordance, often involves a grave interference with the logical order of the original. A great improvement, too, is the distinguishing of poetry from prose, and of quotations from the actual words of the sacred writers. An additional benefit is the newly devised symmetry which groups together, for example, the six "woes" in Isaiah v., and the seven epistles in the Book of Revelation, chaps. ii.-iii. Further, a large debt of gratitude is due to the revisers for many mis-translations corrected; for faulty or obscure renderings made fuller or clearer; for capricious inconsistencies replaced by a uniformity which, especially in St Paul's Epistles, is of great assistance in following the argument or the thought; for obsolete terms and phrases superseded by terms and phrases that can be understood. From all these points of view the value of the work done will best be appreciated by those who will take the trouble to test it as a whole; to compare, for example, the Book of Job, or of Isaiah, or of Ecclesiastes, or the Apocryphal

* See note p. 218.

books, or St Paul's Epistles, in our Old Version and in our New.

Our readers, however, will now be getting anxious that these concluding remarks should not be inconsiderately prolonged, and their anxiety is entitled to be set at rest. We will add, therefore, but a few words more.

Perhaps the "Authorised" will always remain the popular Bible. In any event we do not anticipate that its place will ever be filled by the "Revised." And if, in conclusion, we may make bold to formulate a wish for the success of any future Committee of Revisers, it shall be the wish that no microbe of the *Morbus Grammaticus* shall ever infect them; nor any epidemic of literary fidgets harass and disquiet them; and, lastly, that they shall never be persuaded to devote so disproportionate an amount of their sympathies to our scholarship as to leave little or nothing over for our literary sensibilities. Many of us have long since forgotten the details of our grammars. Still more of us never knew them. But there are few indeed, whether high or low, rich or poor, educated or uneducated, who have not at some time or another come under the religious and literary spell of the grand old English Bible of the Reformation. It may be that the sensibility, whose cause we plead above, should be counted as but a pitiable weakness, and that a reviser should look mainly to his Lexicon and his Grammar. But, seeing how pardonable a weakness it is, we submit this brief sketch to our readers in the pious hope that, when next the Jerusalem Chamber is tenanted by a fresh

body of revisers, they may never be haunted—as we half fear their forerunners may have been haunted—by the ghost of the man who regretted with his last breath that he had not consecrated his whole life to the study of the dative case.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE VULGATE OF JEROME

By the term Vulgate is meant "the current edition for the time being." It is the Latin equivalent for the name given by the Greek Fathers to the Septuagint Version. The earliest Latin Vulgate was what is known as the "Old Latin" translation of the Bible, made in the second century. As now used, the word denotes Jerome's revision of this primitive Latin version with regard to the books of the New Testament, together with his original Latin translation of the Hebrew books of the Old Testament. Jerome's work was therefore a revision of the pre-existent Latin version of the New Testament coupled with his own version of the Old Testament directly from the Hebrew.

The Vulgate in the above sense, namely, Jerome's revision, is the Bible of the Roman Catholic Church as pronounced "authentic" at the Council of Trent.

The following is, in outline, the history of this composite work.

Between the middle and end of the second century the entire Bible was translated by unknown persons

into Latin for the benefit not of the Roman Church which in the first two centuries was more Greek than Latin, but partly in order to make the Scriptures intelligible to the Latin-speaking Church of North Africa, and partly for the benefit of the Churches of Spain, Gaul, and Italy. The Latin translation of the Old Testament was from the Septuagint. The New Testament, on the other hand, was translated from the original Greek.

This earliest Latin translation, which is the Western counterpart of the "Peshito," or Syriac version of the East, goes by the name of the "*Old* Latin," in contrast with Jerome's later Latin work, and it had at least two forms or types. The one was a translation in a rough dialect of a provincial cast, and this type circulated in North Africa. The other was in a more refined dialect, and circulated in Spain, Gaul, and Italy. In the form known as the "Italic," the translation may have been made by the Italian bishops for home use.

The basis of the "Old Latin" was, as has been already said, in the Old Testament the Alexandrine edition of the Septuagint — *including the Apocryphal books which were excluded from the Hebrew Canon* — and in the New Testament such Greek manuscripts as were accessible to the anonymous translators. These Old Latin versions passed in their various forms of dialect from hand to hand, but not as one complete volume. More usually they circulated in portions, as, for example, a roll of the Prophets, of the Psalter, or of some one among the Epistles of St Paul.

By the fourth century the text of this Old Latin version, whether in its African or in its European form, had become exceedingly corrupt, and especially so in those books which were in most constant demand, namely, the Gospels. Such corruption of a text is obviously unavoidable when copies can only be multiplied by hand, and when, to say the least, every copy is thus at the mercy of those constantly recurring mistakes, whether of eye or of ear, to which even the most careful scribe is liable. A further source of error was the assumption by copyists of the functions of editors, and their consequent endeavours to improve the text which they were copying instead of rigidly following it.

Under these circumstances Jerome was invited by Pope Damasus, in or about the year 382 A.D., to make a revision of the "current edition."

Jerome began his work with the Italian type of the Old Latin version of the New Testament. He revised the Gospels with great care, bringing to his assistance the best Greek MSS. that he could find, but making only such alterations as seemed to him to be absolutely necessary. Of the rest of the New Testament books he made a more hurried revision. These books remained, therefore, in an inferior condition as compared with the Gospels. He next turned to that book of the Old Testament which has always enjoyed the widest popularity, namely, the Psalms. His first revision was made by collating the Old Latin with the Septuagint. This revision became known as the "*Roman* Psalter." His next revision was made with

the aid not only of the Septuagint but also of the Hexapla of Origen. This re-revision was called the "*Gallican* Psalter," and it is this version which is printed in all Roman Catholic Bibles.

In or about the year 387 Jerome began his greatest work, the translation *from the Original Hebrew* of the entire Old Testament, and he finished it in 405. For the reason above given, viz., that the Hebrew Canon excludes it, this translation did not include the Apocrypha.

Thus the Vulgate, as we know it, is far from being a homogeneous work. It contains:—

(1) The Old Latin altogether unrevised (Apocrypha).

(2) The Old Latin cursorily revised (Acts to Revelation).

(3) The Old Latin carefully revised (The Gospels).

(4) The Old Testament rendered directly from the original Hebrew.

It is worth observing that our Prayer Book comprises two relicts of renderings from this venerable Old Latin, namely:—

(*a*) The "Benedicite," or "Song of the Three Children," which is an apocryphal addition to Daniel iii. 23.

(*b*) The Psalter, which is Coverdale's revised translation of Jerome's Gallican Psalter.

Jerome's Vulgate, it may be added, was in circulation in England, side by side with the Old Latin, until at least as late as the ninth century.

APPENDIX B.

WYCLIFFE'S DOCTRINE OF "DOMINION"*

As there is nothing more characteristic of Wycliffe than his doctrine of divine and civil dominion, and nothing which more embittered his ecclesiastical opponents, some readers may be interested in a brief sketch of a theory which lies outside the subject of this book.

It is necessary at the outset to lay stress on three points. First, that although Wycliffe remained in name a Catholic to the end—there being as yet no recognised religious standing outside the Latin Church—yet there was always in him a strong admixture of the Predestinarian and of the spirit of the modern Quaker. Secondly, that in propounding his doctrine he does not even pretend to be making any contribution to practical politics. And lastly, that while the doctrine logically applies just as much to secular barons as to monks and bishops, still, as a matter of fact, Wycliffe's eyes remain fixed almost exclusively upon the hierarchy.

Looking round, then, on the world in which he

* This doctrine embraces the author's views on the relations of man to God, and of the temporal to the spiritual power. It includes, moreover, Wycliffe's theory of ecclesiastical endowments.

lived, Wycliffe saw certain established powers in authority. The temporal sphere was governed by the Emperor, the local Kings, and the barons. The ecclesiastical sphere was controlled by the Pope, the Papal legates, and the hierarchy.

Now the history of the Middle Ages is very largely taken up with the inter-collision of these parallel but jealous powers. The Empire wrestles with the Papacy, the Papacy with the local Kings, the monks and bishops with the barons. This rivalry for supremacy between the temporal and spiritual powers gave rise to a question which seems fairly to have haunted the medieval mind, viz., "*Who was the greatest?*" With whom was it that sovereignty, or dominion, could rightly be said to rest? In the scale of nature who came first, the Emperor, the local King, or the Pope? Which held the highest rank, the spiritual order or the temporal order, the Church or the State?

It is to this question that Wycliffe was in part addressing himself, but in framing his solution he makes room in it for a justification, by the aid of Scripture, of his instinctive antagonism to the aggressions of Rome and to the exercise of extra-spiritual powers by an endowed clergy.

Wycliffe's conception of "dominion," as of something feudal in form and Christian in spirit, was borrowed, like the term itself, from his predecessor at Oxford, Richard Fitzralph, Chancellor of the University in 1333, and subsequently Archbishop of Armagh. As defined by Fitzralph, dominion is "lordship conditioned by

service."* But in Wycliffe's ecclesiastical laboratory so many other ingredients are fused up with the borrowed matter that it emerges from the crucible with an inherent freshness and originality of its own. Among these ingredients must be included the author's Augustinian sense of sin and of grace, the Franciscan ideal of "evangelical poverty," and a strong personal conviction that the note of a true Church is the "*Imitatio Christi*," simplicity of life, and the persuasive power of pastoral earnestness.

The method by which Wycliffe proceeds is to select a convenient text here, and a convenient text there, taken in an isolated way and in a literal sense. This scriptural material thus prepared is then stretched upon the rack of the Aristotelian logic, and tortured into compliance with the requirements of a theory whose practical validity was probably never in any doubt in its author's mind.

The theory itself may be abridged as follows :—

Dominion, in the strict sense of the term, belongs not to man, but to God, Who is the Lord Paramount. God has made no special or privileged delegation of it either to Emperors, or to Popes, or to Kings, or to any human authority whatever. But he has made and does make offer of it, on certain conditions, to all His servants alike, whether lay or clerical. An Emperor and a King are as truly vicars of their heavenly Sovereign in things temporal as the Pope is His vicar in things spiritual. The condition on which the offer is, in every case, dependent, is a due reciprocity of

* *De Pauperie Salvatoris.* 1354 (?)

service. Charity, or Love, "seeketh not her own." The truest greatness, then, the highest human dominion, whether for Churches or States or individuals, is to love and serve God and man faithfully. Each man's "dominion" is a kind of distinct spiritual fief. And between a feudal fief and a spiritual fief there is one all-important difference. In the latter there are no intermediary over-lords. In the ideal world of spirit and conscience man holds directly from God. God and man are there face to face.

But man is a fallen being. Were he sinless he would be enabled, by a perfect life of moral obedience, to satisfy the strict covenant of his holding. But, as things are, he cannot of himself do this. Hence dominion is not to be claimed by him as a matter of right. All dominion, temporal as well as spiritual, is *founded on grace.* That man, in Wycliffe's view, and that man only, has true dominion, who, by God's grace working in him, is enabled to live according to His law.

Like the sage of the Stoics, Wycliffe's saint, or perfectly righteous man, is obviously an imaginary and ideal character. For him all things work together for good. In his poverty he is rich, and having nothing he yet possesses all things. In this world he may have tribulation, but in the world of the spirit, in the sight of God, however naked he may be of earthly advantages, he has dominion, he is a king.

The ordinary man, on the other hand, can only have a kind of bastard dominion, inasmuch as unrepented sin must be held to forfeit dominion.

In the kingdom of grace, since each man has all, it follows necessarily that all things must be held in common.

Outside this kingdom of grace there is no such thing as real dominion, for it is only by a sort of moral fiction that a man can be said to possess that of which he does not make a proper use. Still, material possession is a practical matter of fact, and Wycliffe accordingly marks it off by the distinguishing name of *power*. With respect to this spurious dominion, or power, Church and State are co-ordinate authorities. Each within its own sphere is supreme, but the authority of the former, which includes laity as well as clergy, is purely spiritual, while that of the latter is coercive. At this point of his theory Wycliffe is at much pains to guard himself against misapprehension. Though power is not dominion, yet it is *de facto* in possession, and its claims must on no account be disregarded on the ground that, ideally, its title is defective. The existing social order is what it is by the sanction of God, while force and violence can boast of no such sanction. It follows, therefore, that all legal proprietors, good and bad alike, ought in this world to have their possessory title upheld. To constituted authority there must be dutiful submission; the ideal must bow to the real; or, in Wycliffe's extravagant phrase, "God must obey the devil." But if the clerical portion of the Church neglect their spiritual duties, or trespass upon the province of the temporal ruler, the lay portion —for Wycliffe is a strong defender of the priesthood of the laity—should use the strong arm of the State to

reform and to disendow them, as having culpably abused their trust.

Whatever may have been said or done by this or that individual among the medley of political, religious, and social malcontents who for years continued to drift into the central current of Lollardy, no student of Wycliffe will lay it to his charge either that he deliberately closed his eyes to the practical side of things, or that he himself felt any personal sympathy with anarchy.

Indeed, on divesting Wycliffe's doctrine of the feudal technicalities in which he has clothed it, we find nothing either alarming or unfamiliar about it.

The principle that all property has duties attaching to it, as well as rights, has not a very revolutionary ring; nor would most men cavil at the metaphor of stewardship as applied to the relation in which individuals stand to the gifts, whether of mind, or body, or fortune, with which they have been endowed by Providence. The idea is, at any rate, as old as Lucretius, who writes of our earthly pilgrimage:

> "Vitaque mancipio nulli datur, omnibus usu."
> "The fee simple of life is given to none, its usufruct to all."
> (Book III., 971.)

The chief novelty and the chief danger of the theory, in Wycliffe's presentment of it, was its extension from the spiritual into the temporal sphere. To hold that all men are equal in God's sight is but a commonplace of Christianity. But it was assuredly no commonplace, in an age which was torn asunder with rivalries and jealousies, to maintain that, in the proprietary world of Society and politics, no man's title to his holding

was sound save through the invisible operation of a mysterious Grace. Grace is not anything which can be apprehended by courts of law; and a doctrine which may be harmless enough for men who are under the restraint of a sane and sober leader, is apt to become highly dangerous in turbulent times when communism is in the air. At such times what respect was ever paid to a philosopher's safeguards and limitations? If the worldliness of a well-endowed bishop so forfeited his property that it might justly be taken from him, and transferred, let us say, to the coffers of his rival the baron, was the baron's own title any better against a hungry and down-trodden peasantry?

It is the misfortune of all idealism that its cause may be made to suffer through an untimely and inconvenient literalism. So far as regards temporal matters Wycliffe laboured to confine his theory to a realm of abstractions, to a "city of God," an ideal world whose pattern, as Plato would say, was "laid up in heaven." As thus limited, and as thus understood, it is but a harmless dream of perfection. But it must be remembered that his poor preachers were daily moving among an uneducated parochial clergy, barely able to keep the wolf from the door, and among a starving and insurgent peasantry. The agrarian insurrection of the fourteenth century had, as we know well, ample causes of its own; but it is not difficult to imagine that the local versions of this academical and abstract theory, that all property was held subject to "grace," may have acted here and there as a spark to powder, and as fuel to flames.

APPENDIX C.

Some Bibles with Curious Titles

The Bug Bible.—Coverdale's translation of Psalm xci., 5, reads thus: "Thou shalt not nede to be afrayed for eny *bugges* by night."

[The word bug, in this sense, is found in Purvey's revision of Wycliffe, Baruch vi., 69; in the Matthews Bible of 1551; and in Shakspeare's 3 Henry VI., v., "Warwicke was a *bugge* that fear'd us all." Compare bogy, bugaboo, bug-bear.]

The Treacle Bible.—Jer. viii., 22: "There is no more triacle at Galaad." (Coverdale, 1535; Bishops', 1568).

The Breeches Bible.—(The Genevan. See note to page 211, *supra*. The London Edition of the Genevan Bible, dated 1775, has "aprons.")

The Place-makers Bible.—The Genevan of 1562, which in Matt. v., 9, reads: "Blessed are the place-makers."

The Goose Bible.—The Dort Editions of the Genevan. The Dort Press had a goose as its emblem.

The Leda Bible.—(See *supra*, page 229), Second Edition of Bishops' Bible.

The He and She Bibles.—(See page 275).

The Vinegar Bible.—(See page 275).

The Murderers Bible.—So called from a misprint of "murderers" for "murmurers" in Jude, verse 16.

The Standing Fishes Bible, 1806, where Ezek. xlvii., 10 (the fishers shall stand beside the river) runs, "the fishes will stand upon it."

APPENDIX D.

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